

# Surveys and Choices

Moodle has two tools specifically designed for collecting ungraded feedback from your students: surveys and choices.

A survey is a set of predetermined questions. It's not yet possible to create your own questions in a survey unless you install a nonstandard module such as Questionnaire or Feedback. The current survey focuses on getting feedback from students about the nature of the course.

Choices are small, one-question surveys. They act as small web polls that you may have seen on other web sites. You can use a choice to get rapid feedback from your students about any topic you wish, as long as it's only one question long.

## Surveys

*This section covers the following MTC skills: 5.6 Survey*

There are three types of surveys you can give:

*COLLES (Constructivist On-Line Learning Environment Survey)*

This is a set of 24 statements that asks students about the relevance of the course, provides opportunities for reflection and interactivity, provides peer and tutor support, and facilitates interpretation. These factors are based on social constructivist theory, as discussed in Chapter 1. Variations on the survey ask students to discuss their preferred learning environment or the actual learning environment. Moodle offers three types of COLLES surveys: preferred, actual, or a combination of the two. The preferred COLLES survey asks students to discuss how they think they want to interact with a course, while the actual COLLES survey asks them how they are interacting currently.

*ATTLS (Attitudes to Thinking and Learning Survey)*

ATTLS seeks to measure the quality of interaction within a course. It builds on the "Separate and Connected ways of knowing" scale, which we discussed in Chapter 13.

### *Critical Incidents*

The Critical Incidents survey asks students to consider recent events and answer questions about their relationship to those events.

## **Creating Surveys**

The limited nature of the surveys tool makes surveys very easy to create. Basically, you select the set of prewritten questions you'd like to give, edit the introductory text, and you're done.

To create a survey:

1. Click the "Turn editing on" button.
2. Select Survey from the "Add an activity" drop-down menu in the course section where you would like to add the survey.
3. On the "Adding a new survey page," as shown in Figure 14-1, give the survey a name.
4. Select the type of survey you want to give from the drop-down menu.
5. If you wish, add an introduction to the survey.
6. Select the common module options:

#### *Group mode*

This is another location in which to set the group mode for the activity. If group mode is forced in the course settings then this setting will be ignored.

#### *Visible*

This determines whether students may view the activity or not.

7. Click the "Save changes" button.
8. The following page displays the question set you have chosen. Click the "Check and continue" button at the bottom of the page.

## **Administering Surveys**

Once you've created the survey, students can begin to give their feedback. They simply click on the survey name in the course section and answer the questions. Once students have begun to answer the survey questions, you can track results via the "View xx survey responses" link at the top right of the survey page.

The survey report page contains links at the top right for viewing the data by course, by student, or by question. You can also download the data in a choice of three formats: Open Document Spreadsheet, Excel, or text.

**General**

Name\* Critical Incidents

Survey type\* ? Choose...  
 Choose...  
 ATTLS (20 item version)  
 Critical Incidents  
 COLLES (Actual)  
 COLLES (Preferred and Actual)  
 COLLES (Preferred)

Custom intro

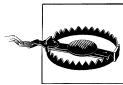
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**Common module settings**

Group mode ? No groups

Visible Show

Figure 14-1. Adding a new survey



Moodle surveys are not anonymous. While students cannot see each other's results, you can view each student's survey. There is no way to ensure anonymity. If you are using these results for research, you must develop a scheme to download the data and assign participant numbers. You should also inform students of this limitation.

The COLLES and ATTLS questions are five-point scales that range in response from “Almost always” to “Almost never” for COLLES and from “Strongly agree” to “Strongly disagree” for ATTLS. These results are reported in graphical form when you view them, as illustrated in Figure 14-2.

The Critical Incidents survey is a free-response survey where students must type their answers. You can see what students have typed for each answer. Later in this chapter, we'll discuss how to apply the data you gather.

## Survey Capabilities

The survey module has three capabilities:

### *Respond to survey*

This allows a user to participate in a survey.

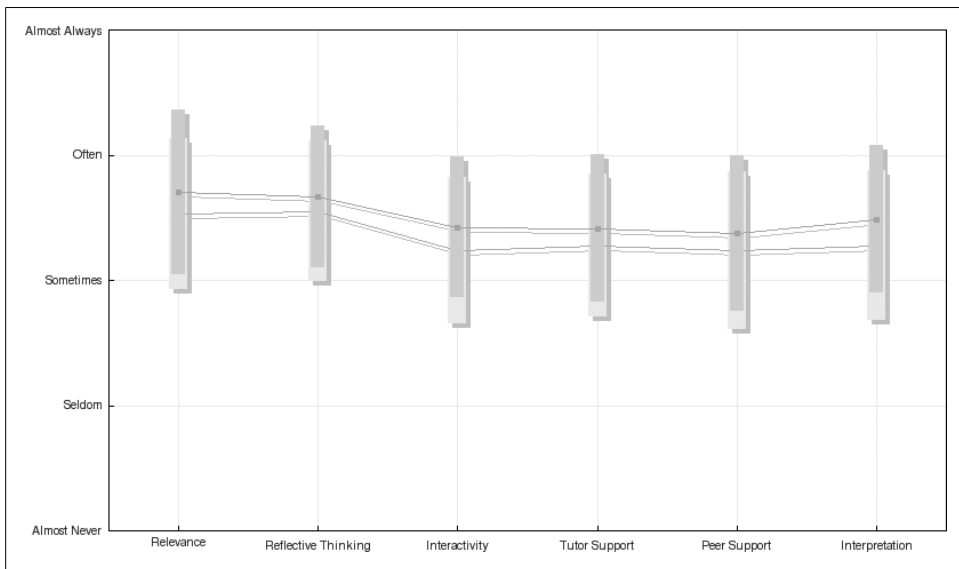


Figure 14-2. A COLLES survey report summary

### View responses

This allows a user to read survey responses via the “View xx survey responses” link at the top right of the survey page.

### Download responses

This allows a user to download survey responses.

## Choices

*This section covers the following MTC skills: 5.3 Choice*

Unlike surveys, the choice tool allows you to ask any question you’d like, as long as it’s multiple-choice. Once you’ve set up your choice, it acts as a poll in your course. Students click on the choice and select their answer. You can choose when and if students see the results of the choice and even let them change their minds.

## Creating Choices

To create a choice:

1. Click the “Turn editing on” button.
2. Select Choice from the “Add an activity” drop-down menu.
3. On the “Adding a new choice” page, as shown in Figure 14-3, give the choice a descriptive name.

4. Enter the question text in the choice text area.
5. Choose whether to limit the number of responses allowed. If this is enabled, each response can be assigned a different limit. When the limit is reached, nobody else will be able to select the response. If limiting the number of responses is disabled, then any number of participants can select each of the responses.
6. Enter responses in each choice field. If you require more than 5 fields, click the “Add 3 fields to form” button. You can fill in any number of choice fields—if you leave some blank, they will not be displayed.
7. If you want the question to be available for a limited time, click the “Restrict answering to this time period” checkbox and set the opening and closing dates and times for the choice.
8. Select the miscellaneous options:

*Display mode*

Choose whether the responses are displayed horizontally or vertically.



A small number of responses looks better displayed horizontally, and a large number of responses and/or long responses look better displayed vertically.

*Publish results*

You have four options for revealing the results of the choice to students:

- Do not publish results to students
- Show results to students immediately after they answer
- Show results to students only after the choice is closed (if you’ve set a closing time above)
- Always show results to students

*Privacy of results*

Depending upon your “Publish results” setting, you can choose whether to display students’ names with their response in the results.

*Allow choice to be updated*

If you want to allow students to change their minds after they’ve answered, set this to Yes. Otherwise, students will be able to answer the question only once.

*Show column for unanswered*

This option determines whether students will see the number of people who haven’t answered the question when they see the choice results.

9. Select the common module options:

**General**

Choice name\*

Choice text\*

Trebuchet 1 (8 pt) Lang **B** *I* U ~~S~~ x<sub>2</sub> x<sup>2</sup> [link] [undo] [redo]

[bulleted list] [numbered list] [indent] [outdent] [undo] [redo] [link] [unlink] [table] [table border] [table border style] [table border width] [table border color] [table border style] [table border width] [table border color]

Path:

Format  HTML format

**Limit**

Limit the number of responses allowed  Disable

**Choice 1**

Choice

Limit

**Choice 2**

Choice

Limit

Figure 14-3. Adding a new choice

#### Group mode

This is another location in which to set the group mode for the activity. If group mode is forced in the course settings then this setting will be ignored.

#### Visible

This determines whether students may view the activity or not.

10. Click the “Save changes” button.

Once you’ve created the choice, it will be available to students after the opening time, if you’ve set one.

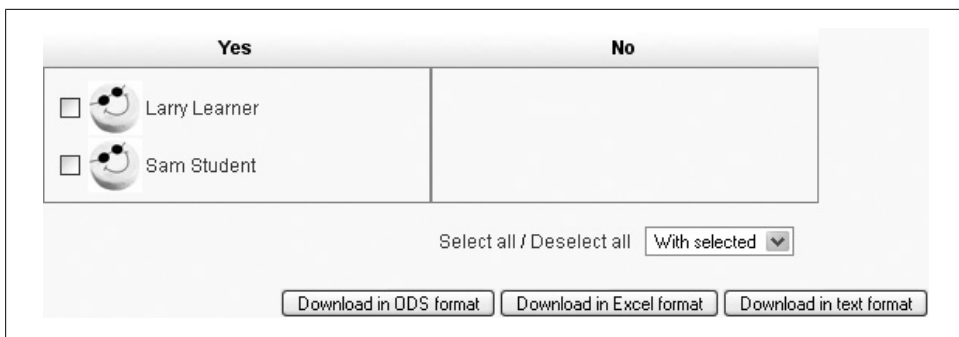


Figure 14-4. Viewing choice responses

## Administering Choices

After students have answered the choice, you can see their responses via the “View xx responses” link at the top right of the choice page. Unlike the students’ view of the results, irrespective of whether results are published anonymously, you’ll see a column for each response with the student’s picture and name, as shown in Figure 14-4.

Selected responses may be deleted if you wish. You may like to delete any test response you made.

As for surveys, results may be downloaded in a choice of three formats by clicking the appropriate button at the bottom of the choice responses page.

## Choice Capabilities

The choice module capabilities are restricted to managing the responses from students:

### *Record a choice*

This allows a user to answer the choice.

### *Read responses*

This allows a user to view other users’ responses.

### *Delete responses*

This allows a user to delete choice responses.

### *Download responses*

This allows a user to download the full dataset of responses from other users.

## Using Surveys and Choices

Surveys and choices represent two different tools for gathering feedback data from students. Moodle surveys are formal and based in theory. Choices are quick and simple for both you and your students. They can both provide useful data about your course and your students’ success.

The COLLES and ATTLS surveys are a bit too long to be used frequently. They provide useful feedback if you want to revise your course to meet student needs, but answering a set of 24 questions on a regular basis can become tedious for your students.

*Jason:* I recommend using the ATTLS or COLLES survey three times per semester (or twice a quarter if you're on the quarter system). You may want to deliver the first survey after the first few weeks to get some early feedback on student perceptions of the course, once at the midterm to make adjustments for the second half, and once at the end of the course to get summative feedback to include in the next semester's course design.

Of the available surveys, the COLLES and Critical Incidents are the most useful for making decisions about your course design. In the COLLES survey, pay close attention to the relevance scores. Student perception of course relevance is very important in determining student satisfaction and learning. If a student believes a course isn't relevant to her life, she will have difficulty spending the time required to be successful. Her performance will suffer, and her perception of the value of the course will diminish.

The Critical Incidents survey can provide useful feedback at the end of a topic or week. If you're trying something new, use this survey to get student feedback on the success of the topic. Because it's only five questions long, you can use it more frequently than the other two surveys.

Choices can be offered much more frequently. Many web sites use quick polls to inform or entertain their readers. Local and national news outlets run informal, nonscientific polls through their sites to gauge public opinion. You can use your choices to do the same. Choices can be about anything from course content to current school events.

Choices can also be used to provide an opportunity to share starting points through which students are encouraged to think about and articulate existing knowledge and understanding of a topic. Choices can encourage students to think in advance of a follow-up related activity, such as a forum discussion or an online text assignment.