Using Surveys and Interviews

 **How to Start**

* Determine what you need to know.
  + **Qualitative** information (descriptions, observations, opinions)
  + **Quantitative** information (numbers, measurements, statistics)
* Select the methods that will get you that information.
  + You may need to use a **focus group** or do a few **test interviews** to find out what you need to ask about before you can even start. You might choose to do **experiments** or **case studies** instead of surveys.

**Interviews**

**Weaknesses**

* Not ideal if there are time or access limits

**When and How to Use**

* Good if you want to know opinions, facts or about experiences
* When you want to understand the **reasons** for decisions or attitudes
* When the topic is **sensitive** and you need their trust
* If the topic is too **complex** for a survey and you will need to clarify and ask further questions in response to answers given.

**Who to Interview**

* Experts recommend about 15 interviews of relevant people for accuracy but you should do at least 5 at Year 11 level.

**Surveys**

**Weaknesses**

* Surveys can be great but they are not always appropriate. If you are collecting qualitative information it is usually better to use interviews than surveys.
* They are hard to construct; most people don’t realize how difficult it is to create a good survey.
* Also, surveys depend on people reporting things accurately to you.

**When and How to Use**

* When you ask **what kind** of computer someone uses, it’s pretty easy for them to give you an accurate answer. But when you ask them something like how many hours a day they study there is no way that you are going to get useful information.
* Simple stuff is better in surveys such as:
  + identification of requirements or preferences,
  + assessing satisfaction
  + identifying problems
  + evaluating what people think about issues.
* Design questions that are multiple choice or have numerical answers so that you can collect quantitative data. This allows you to easily present and analyse results using graphs.

 **Who to Survey**

* Not just Year 11s (or Heritage school students) unless that is your exclusive target group. Ask the people you want to know about!!!
* If you want 25 responses you need to send out 100 surveys (4x as many as you need).
* It depends on the size of the group you are studying as to how many responses you need. (If you want to know something about Christadelphians in Adelaide, about 4000 people, to get reasonably accurate results you need at least 100 responses).