



Interview guide

Religious Diversity and Interfaith Learning

SoSe 2025

Interview guide

- Write the introduction
- A very brief description of the research and an introduction to the researcher
- Consent
- Open questions
- No complicated or long sentences
- Well-structured
- No longer than 1–2 pages

Interview guide

- Avoid overloading the questionnaire with too many questions (10–12 questions, max. 20)
- Clear and understandable questions
- Value-neutral questions
- Easy to use and well-organised
- A deductive structure for the questionnaire: from the general to the specific
- Respect the natural flow of memory and reasoning
- Place questions that encourage longer narratives towards the beginning – shorter ones at the end
- An open-ended guide does not block new aspects of the topic, but incorporates them

Interview structure

- Thanks
- Introduction to the researcher
- Outline of the study's objectives and general structure
- Confidentiality agreement / Consent to be recorded
- Interview guidelines: THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS
- Warm-up
- Long questions
- Short questions (demographic data)
- Thanks! And an explanation of what happens to the data

Types of questions

- Open-ended questions

Closed questions

Multi-part questions /
follow-up questions

Situational questions

Aim: to encourage the interviewee to talk

Aim: to elicit specific information

Aim: To highlight connections,
encourage reflection

Aim: to encourage reflection and specificity

Openness

- The respondent should be encouraged to express everything they consider important
- The researcher should listen to what is said with as few preconceptions as possible
- What is said should not be distorted by the researcher's attitudes, beliefs and opinions

Positive: Show genuine interest

Show unconditional respect for the other person

Undertake an unbiased understanding

Negative: Make judgements, signal agreement or disagreement

Incorporate (implicit) expectations into the questions

The fundamental principle of openness

- The interviewee never lies
- There are no unexpected statements
- Nothing is irrelevant
- No hypotheses, only questions
- Enable new or revised questions

The interview – the conversation

- A relaxed atmosphere; the opening is key (small talk)
- Steering the conversation
- Striking a balance between letting the conversation flow and stepping in
- Showing interest in new points
- Save sensitive questions for the end
- Don't run over time
- Off the record means off the record!!!

Important points to bear in mind when conducting interviews:

- Choose a suitable setting (undisturbed, natural surroundings)
- Don't forget the warm-up, introduction and conclusion
- Paraphrase (repeat what has been said)
- Be patient and allow the interviewee to pause to think
- Facial expressions, gestures and words should not be judgemental
- No preconceptions
- Follow-up questions: "How did that feel for you?" "You said: ... could you explain that in more detail?"
- Hypothetical questions: If that were the case, how would that feel for you?

Important points to bear in mind when conducting interviews:

- If the interviewee can't think of anything or very little: People think in terms of situations (“If you think back to the last time... what was that like (for you)? If you think back to the last argument, the last stressful situation in class, etc., could you describe that situation to me?”)
- Introduce a different perspective: “How do you think your best friend would describe you?”
“How would pupils describe you as a teacher?”
- The questions do not have to be asked in order.
- The questions do not have to be phrased exactly the same way.
- The aim is to create a conversational atmosphere.
- If a new aspect emerges – explore it.

Thank you and
good luck!

Stay curious &
serious!

