IQDA

Irish Qualitative Data Archive

Cartlann Fhaisnéise Cáilíochtúla na hÉireann

USING THE ANONYMISATION TOOL

How to use the Anonymisation Tool

1. **Save your transcript as a text file (.txt).**
2. **Create a *"Changes File"* . This lists both the original names and the anonymised names.**

This can be done by setting up an excel file in which there are two columns: name in transcript and anonymised name. Make sure you use the same spelling in the table as in the transcript.

> **Note 1:** We suggest adding another three columns." Nature of individual or place" and "Special alerts or queries". These will not be part of the anonymisation process. However recording this information aids review of the anonymisation process by yourself and/or other members of the research team, and helps ensure consistency across documents.
> It is also a good idea to note any named person or place even if you decide not to anonymise them.

> **Note 2:** It is desirable to indicate in the text where anonymisation has occurred, both to inform secondary researchers and to facilitate checking and proofing the process of anonymisation itself. We recommend the following approach.

> At the start of the text to be anonymised, use the punctuation marks @@. At the end of the text, use the marks ##. These characters are unlikely to appear for any other reason in the text.

> For example: "My mother's name was Mary Brown" becomes "My mother's name was @@Ann Smith##."

> For further guidelines on anonymisation, see the protocol prepared by the IQDA which is available on our website; www.iqda.ie
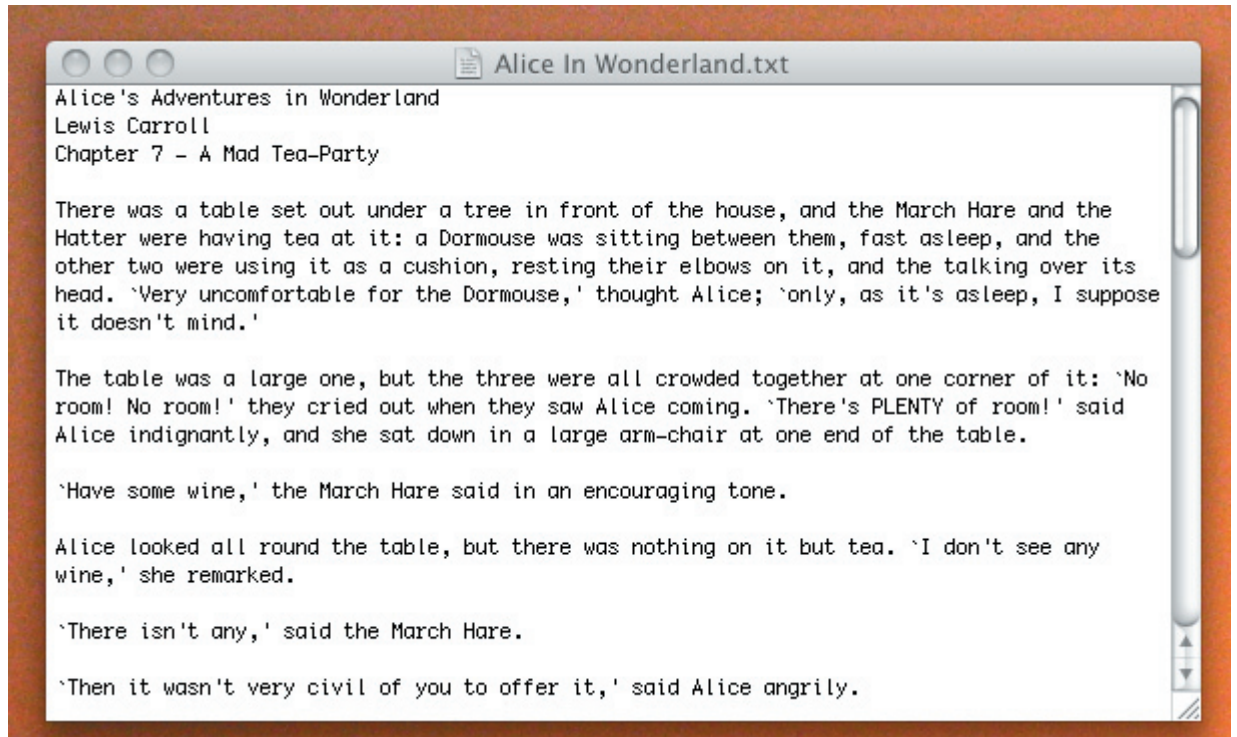
3. **Save the *"Changes File'*] as a text file.**
4. **Open the Anonymisation Tool by double clicking on**

   iqda_anonmymisation_tool.jar

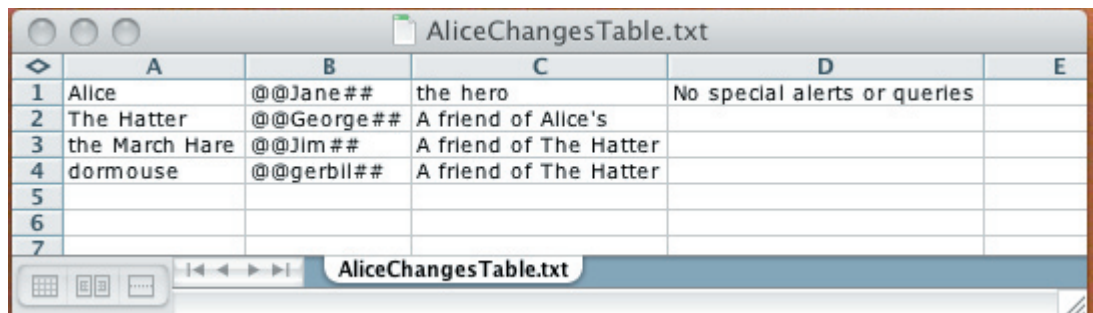5. **Choose your transcript, that is file that is to be changed.**
6. **Choose the *"Changes File*", that is the file with the names to be re-placed.**
7. **Anonymize Now.**

If you tick the "make comparison file" tickbox, a file will be produced which shows both the original text and the changed text. This can be useful if returning transcripts to interviewees, or if reviewing anonymisation among a team.

IQDA

Irish Qualitative Data Archive

Cartlann Fhaisnéise Cáilíochtúla na hÉireann

Example of a transcript, saved as a text file


```
                                    📄 Alice In Wonderland.txt
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Lewis Carroll
Chapter 7 – A Mad Tea-Party

There was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the
Hatter were having tea at it: a Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the
other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and the talking over its
head. `Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse,' thought Alice; `only, as it's asleep, I suppose
it doesn't mind.'

The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it: `No
room! No room!' they cried out when they saw Alice coming. `There's PLENTY of room!' said
Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.

`Have some wine,' the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.

Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. `I don't see any
wine,' she remarked.

`There isn't any,' said the March Hare.

`Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it,' said Alice angrily.
```

Example of a *Change File*, an excel file saved as a text file

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Alice	@@Jane##	the hero	No special alerts or queries	
2	The Hatter	@@George##	A friend of Alice's		
3	the March Hare	@@Jim##	A friend of The Hatter		
4	dormouse	@@gerbil##	A friend of The Hatter		
5					
6					
7					

AliceChangesTable.txt

BE AWARE:

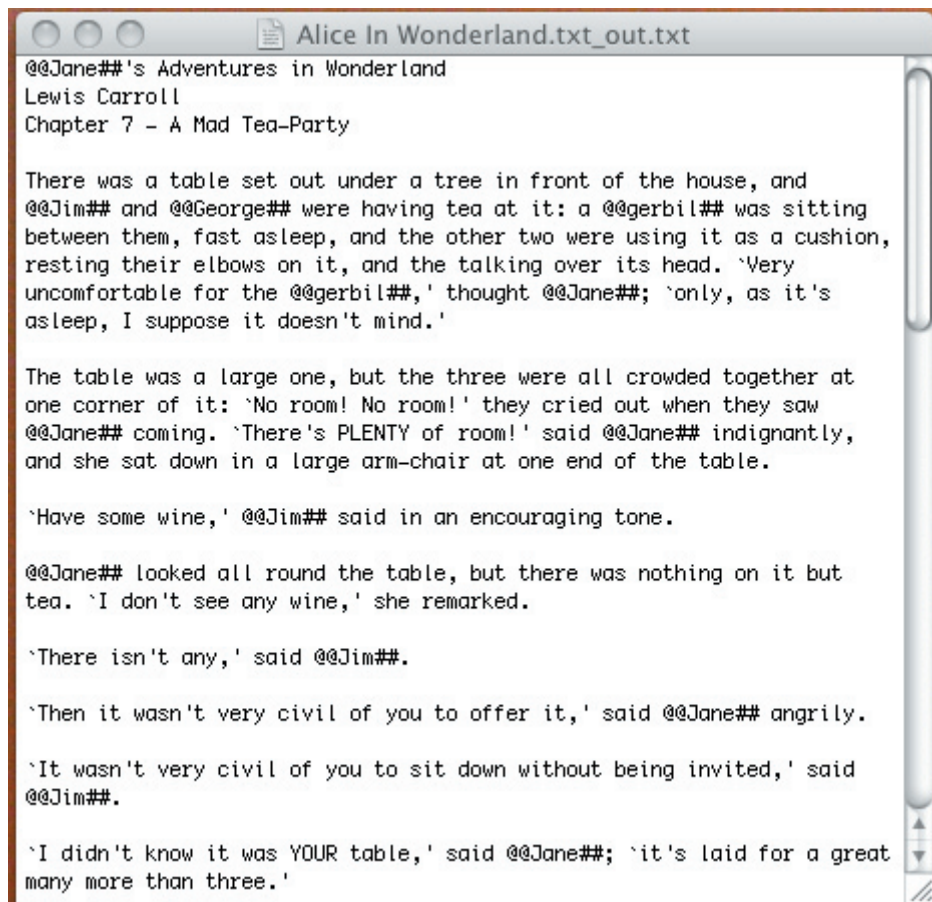The files must be saved as .txt files for this to work.

If you use the same names in both columns, the tool may not fully anonymise the transcript

IQDA
Irish Qualitative Data Archive
Cartlann Fhaisnéise Cáilíochtúla na hÉireann

Screen Shot of the IQDA Data Anonymiser
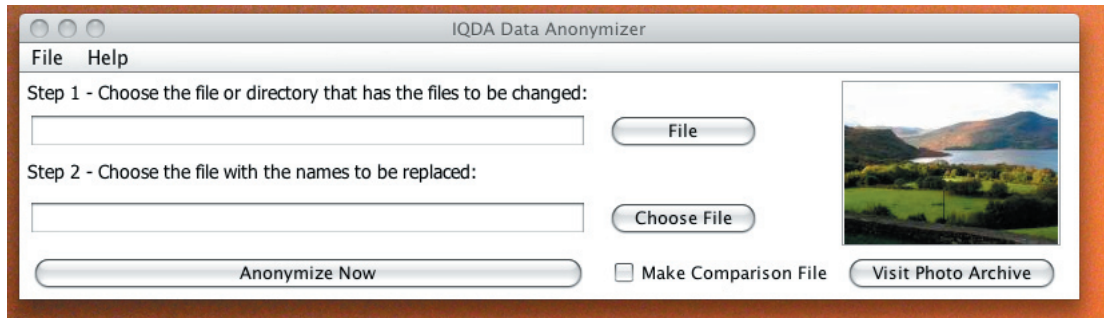
Screen Shot of the Anonymised Transcript

This version of the tool is in Beta (testing phase). If you encounter any problems or difficulties we would be grateful if you would inform us at iqda@nuim.ie