

Appendix IV: Quality Assessment Template (Adapted from [1])

1. Theoretical or conceptual underpinning to the research

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| 0 | No mention at all | |
| 1 | General reference to broad theories or concepts that frame the study | e.g. key concepts were identified in the introduction section |
| 2 | Identification of specific theories or concepts that frame the study and how these informed the work undertaken | e.g. key concepts were identified in the introduction section and applied to the study |
| 3 | Explicit discussion of the theories or concepts that inform the study, with application of the theory or concept evident through the design, materials and outcomes explored | e.g. key concepts were identified in the introduction section and the application apparent in each element of the study design |

2. Statement of research aim/s

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| 0 | No mention at all |
| 1 | Reference to what the sought to achieve embedded within the report but no explicit aims statement |
| 2 | Aims statement made but may only appear in the abstract or be lacking detail |
| 3 | Explicit and detailed statement of aim/s in the main body of report |

3. Clear description of research setting and target population

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|---|---|--|
| 0 | No mention at all | |
| 1 | General description of research area but not of the specific research environment | e.g. 'in primary care' |
| 2 | Description of research setting is made but is lacking detail | e.g. 'in primary care practices in region [x]' |
| 3 | Specific description of the research setting and target population of study | e.g. 'nurses and doctors from GP practices in [x] part of [x] city in [x] country' |

4. The study design is appropriate to address the stated research aim/s

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|---|---|---|
| 0 | No research aim/s stated or the design is entirely unsuitable | e.g. a Y/N item survey for a study seeking to undertake exploratory work of lived experiences |
| 1 | The study design can only address some aspects of the stated research aim/s | e.g. use of focus groups to capture data regarding the frequency and experience of a disease |
| 2 | The study design can address the stated research aim/s but there is a more suitable alternative that could have been used or used in addition | e.g. addition of a qualitative or quantitative component could strengthen the design |
| 3 | The study design selected appears to be the most suitable approach to attempt to answer the stated research aim/s | |

5. Appropriate sampling to address the research aim/s

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|---|---|--|
| 0 | No mention of the sampling approach | |
| 1 | Evidence of consideration of the sample required | e.g. the sample characteristics are described and appear appropriate to address the research aim/s |
| 2 | Evidence of consideration of sample required to address the aim | e.g. the sample characteristics are described with reference to the aim/s |
| 3 | Detailed evidence of consideration of the sample required to address the research aim/s | e.g. sample size calculation or discussion of an iterative sampling process with reference to the research aims or the case selected for study |

6. Rationale for choice of data collection tool/s

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| 0 | No mention of rationale for data collection tool used | |
| 1 | Very limited explanation for choice of data collection tool/s | e.g. based on availability of tool |
| 2 | Basic explanation of rationale for choice of data collection tool/s | e.g. based on use in a prior similar study |
| 3 | Detailed explanation of rationale for choice of data collection tool/s | e.g. relevance to the study aim/s, co- designed with the target population or assessments of tool quality |

7. The format and content of data collection tool is appropriate to address the stated research aim/s

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| 0 | No research aim/s stated and/or data collection tool not detailed | |
| 1 | Structure and/or content of tool/s suitable to address some aspects of the research aim/s or to address the aim/s superficially | e.g. single item response that is very general or an open-response item to capture content which requires probing |
| 2 | Structure and/or content of tool/s allow for data to be gathered broadly addressing the stated aim/s but could benefit from refinement | e.g. the framing of survey or interview questions are too broad or focused to one element of the research aim/s |
| 3 | Structure and content of tool/s allow for detailed data to be gathered around all relevant issues required to address the stated research aim/s | |

8. Description of data collection procedure

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|---|--|---|
| 0 | No mention of the data collection procedure | |
| 1 | Basic and brief outline of data collection procedure | e.g. 'using a questionnaire distributed to staff' |
| 2 | States each stage of data collection procedure but with limited detail or states some stages in detail but omits others | e.g. the recruitment process is mentioned but lacks important details |
| 3 | Detailed description of each stage of the data collection procedure, including when, where and how data was gathered such that the procedure could be replicated | |

Appendix IV: Quality Assessment Template

9. Recruitment data provided

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|---|---|--|
| 0 | No mention of recruitment data. | |
| 1 | Minimal and basic recruitment data | e.g. number of people invited who agreed to take part. |
| 2 | Some recruitment data but not a complete account | e.g. number of people who were invited and agreed. |
| 3 | Complete data allowing for full picture of recruitment outcomes | e.g. number of people approached, recruited, and who completed with attrition data explained where relevant. |

10. Justification for analytic method selected

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| 0 | No mention of the rationale for the analytic method chosen. | |
| 1 | Very limited justification for choice of analytic method selected. | e.g. previous use by the research team. |
| 2 | Basic justification for choice of analytic method selected. | e.g. method used in prior similar research. |
| 3 | Detailed justification for choice of analytic method selected. | e.g. relevance to the study aim/s or comment around of the strengths of the method selected. |

11. The method of analysis was appropriate to answer the research aim/s

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| 0 | No mention at all. | |
| 1 | Method of analysis can only address the research aim/s basically or broadly. | |
| 2 | Method of analysis can address the research aim/s but there is a more suitable alternative that could have been used or used in addition to offer a stronger analysis. | |
| 3 | Method of analysis selected is the most suitable approach to attempt answer the research aim/s in detail | e.g. for qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis might be considered preferable for experiences vs. content analysis to elicit frequency of occurrence of events. |

12. Evidence that the research stakeholders have been considered in research design or conduct.

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|---|--|---|
| 0 | No mention at all. | |
| 1 | Consideration of some the research stakeholders | e.g. use of pilot study with target sample but no stakeholder involvement in planning stages of study design. |
| 2 | Evidence of stakeholder input informing the research. | e.g. use of pilot study with feedback influencing the study design/conduct or reference to a project reference group established to guide the research. |
| 3 | Substantial consultation with stakeholders identifiable in planning of study design and in preliminary work. | e.g. consultation in the conceptualisation of the research, a project advisory group or evidence of stakeholder input informing the work. |

13. Strengths and limitations critically discussed

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| 0 | No mention at all. | |
| 1 | Very limited mention of strengths and limitations with omissions of many key issues. | e.g. one or two strengths/limitations mentioned with limited detail. |
| 2 | Discussion of some of the key strengths and weaknesses of the study but not complete. | e.g. several strengths/limitations explored but with notable omissions or lack of depth of explanation. |
| 3 | Thorough discussion of strengths and limitations of all aspects of study including design, methods, data collection tools, sample & analytic approach. | |

References

1. Harrison R, Jones B, Gardner P, Lawton R. Quality assessment with diverse studies (QuADS): an appraisal tool for methodological and reporting quality in systematic reviews of mixed- or multi-method studies. BMC Health Serv Res. 2021 Feb 15;21(1):144.