

Supplementary file 4: RAMESES publication standards checklist

1	Title, identifies the document as a realist synthesis or review.	Yes	Page 1
2	Abstracts should ideally contain brief details of the study's background, review question or objectives; search strategy; methods of selection, appraisal, analysis and synthesis of sources; main results; and implications for practice.	Yes	Page 3-4
3	Explain why the review is needed and what it is likely to contribute to existing understanding of the topic area.	Yes	Page 7-8
4	State the objective(s) of the review and/or the review question(s). Define and provide a rationale for the focus of the review.	Yes	Page 8
5	Any changes made to the review that was initially planned should be briefly described and justified.	NA	
6	Explain why realist synthesis was considered the most appropriate method to use.	Yes	Page 7
7	Describe and justify the initial process of exploratory scoping of the literature.	Yes	Page 9
8	State and provide a rationale for how the iterative searching was done. Provide details on all the sources accessed for information in the synthesis. For example, where electronic databases have been searched, details should include, for example, the name of the database, search terms, dates of coverage and date last searched. If individuals familiar with the relevant literature and/or topic area were contacted, indicate how they were identified and selected.	Yes	Page 9 and 10
9	Explain how judgements were made about including and excluding data from documents, and justify these.	Yes	Page 10
10	Describe and explain which data or information were extracted from the included documents and justify this selection.	Yes	Page 10, 11, Supplementary files 1 and 3
11	Describe the analysis and synthesis processes in detail. This section should include information on the constructs analysed and describe the analytic process.	Yes	Page 11, 12 and 15,16
12	Provide details on the number of documents assessed for eligibility and included in the review with reasons for exclusion at each stage, as well as an indication of their source	Yes	Abstract briefly, Table 2

	of origin (for example, from searching databases, reference lists and so on).		
13	Provide information on the characteristics of the documents included in the synthesis.	Yes	Supplementary file 1
14	Present the key findings with a specific focus on theory building and testing.	Yes	Pages 15, 16 and 17
15	Summarize the main findings, taking into account the synthesis' objective(s), research question(s), focus and intended audience(s).	Yes	Pages 17-18
16	Discuss both the strengths of the review and its limitations. These should include (but need not be restricted to) (a) consideration of all the steps in the synthesis process and (b) comment on the overall strength of evidence supporting the explanatory insights that emerged. The limitations identified may point to areas where further work is needed.	Yes	Page 20
17	Where applicable, compare and contrast the synthesis' findings with the existing literature (for example, other reviews) on the same topic.	Yes	Page 19
18	List the main implications of the findings and place these in the context of other relevant literature. If appropriate, offer recommendations for policy and practice.	Yes	Page 20
19	Provide details of funding source (if any) for the synthesis, the role played by the funder (if any) and any conflicts of interests of the reviewers.	Yes	Page 5