

# CNSP

## Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

### CASP Checklist: For systematic reviews

Reviewer Name:	
Paper Title:	
Author:	
Web Link:	
Appraisal Date:	

During critical appraisal, never make assumptions about what the researchers have done. If it is not possible to tell, use the “Can’t tell” response box. If you can’t tell, at best it means the researchers have not been explicit or transparent, but at worst it could mean the researchers have not undertaken a particular task or process. Once you’ve finished the critical appraisal, if there are a large number of “Can’t tell” responses, consider whether the findings of the study are trustworthy and interpret the results with caution.

Section A: Are the results of the review valid?	
1. Did the review address a clearly focused question?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <p><i>Did the researchers state a research question?</i>  <i>For a systematic review, a research question can be 'formulated' in terms of the PECO framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Population</i></li> <li>• <i>Exposure/Risk factor</i></li> <li>• <i>Comparator/Controls</i></li> <li>• <i>Outcome/s or Event/s</i></li> </ul>	
2. Did the authors look for the right type of papers?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <p><i>The best sort of studies' would</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the review's question</li> <li>• Have an appropriate study design (usually RCTs for papers evaluating interventions)</li> </ul>	
3. Do you think all the important, relevant studies were included?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which bibliographic databases were used</li> <li>• Follow up from reference lists</li> <li>• Personal contact with experts</li> <li>• Unpublished as well as published studies</li> <li>• Non-English language studies</li> </ul>	
4. Did the review's authors do enough to assess quality of the included studies?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell

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*CONSIDER WHETHER:*

*The authors need to consider the rigour of the studies they have identified. Lack of rigour may affect the studies' results ("All that glitters is not gold" Merchant of Venice – Act II Scene 7)*

5. If the results of the review have been combined, was it reasonable to do so?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
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- CONSIDER WHETHER:*
- Results were similar from study to study
  - Results of all the included studies are clearly displayed
  - Results of different studies are similar
  - Reasons for any variations in results are discussed

**Section B: What are the results?**

6. What are the overall results of the review?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
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- CONSIDER WHETHER:*
- *If you are clear about the review's 'bottom line' results*
  - *What these are (numerically if appropriate)*
  - *How were the results expressed (NNT, odds ratio etc.)*

7. How precise are the results?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
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*CONSIDER WHETHER:*

*Look at the confidence intervals, if given*

**Section C: Will the results help locally?**

8. Can the results be applied to the local population?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The patients covered by the review could be sufficiently different to your population to cause concern</li> <li>• Your local setting is likely to differ much from that of the review</li> </ul>	
9. Were all important outcomes considered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is other information you would like to have seen</li> </ul>	
10. Are the benefits worth the harms and costs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Can't Tell
<p><i>CONSIDER WHETHER:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Even if this is not addressed by the review, what do you think?</li> </ul>	

### CASP General SR Checklist: Collation of critical appraisal responses

Yes	Checklist question	Can't tell	No
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**A. Are the results of the review valid?**

	1. Did the review address a clearly focused question?		
	2. Did the authors look for the right type of papers?		
	3. Do you think all the important, relevant studies were included?		
	4. Did the review's authors do enough to assess quality of the included studies?		
	5. If the results of the review have been combined, was it reasonable to do so?		

**B. What are the results?**

	6. What are the overall results of the review?		
	7. How precise are the results?		

**C. Will the results help locally?**

	8. Can the results be applied to the local population?		
	9. Were all important outcomes considered?		
	10. Are the benefits worth the harms and costs?		

**APPRAISAL SUMMARY:** List key points from your critical appraisal that need to be considered when assessing the validity of the results and their usefulness in decision-making.

Positive/Methodologically sound	Negative/Relatively poor methodology	Unknowns

**Referencing recommendation:**

CASP recommends using the Harvard style referencing, which is an author/date method. Sources are cited within the body of your assignment by giving the name of the author(s) followed by the date of publication. All other details about the publication are given in the list of references or bibliography at the end.

Example:

*Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2024). CASP (insert name of checklist i.e. systematic reviews.) [online] Available at: insert URL. Accessed: insert date accessed.*

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