

## The GRADE guidelines

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What they are:

The Grading of Recommendations Assessment Development and Evaluation (GRADE) is a system of rating the quality of evidence and grading the strength of recommendations in systematic reviews and guidelines.

A series of numbered articles provide a practical guide to the GRADE process;

1. Introduction
2. Framing the question
3. Rating the quality of evidence
4. Rating the quality of evidence – study limitations (risk of bias)
5. Rating the quality of evidence – publication bias
6. Rating the quality of evidence – imprecision
7. Rating the quality of evidence – inconsistency
8. Rating the quality of evidence – indirectness
9. Rating up the quality of evidence
10. Considering resource use and rating the quality of economic evidence
11. Making an overall rating of confidence in effect estimates for a single outcome and for all outcomes
12. Preparing summary of findings tables – binary outcomes
13. Preparing summary of findings tables and evidence profiles – continuous outcomes
14. Going from evidence to recommendations the significance and presentation of recommendations
15. Going from evidence to recommendations – determinants of a recommendations direction and strength

Why they might be useful for University of Edinburgh researchers in the Centre for Population Health Sciences:

GRADE system provides “a transparent and structured process for developing and presenting evidence from systematic reviews and guidelines in health care and carrying out the steps involved in developing recommendations”. This serves to guide researchers in formulating recommendations and is also designed to help clinicians, policy makers and patients who may use the recommendations.

Although confined to the interpretation of findings from systematic reviews and guidelines (secondary research), the GRADE system is relevant to a range of clinical questions evaluating interventions used in diagnosis, screening, prevention and therapy. As well as addressing clinical questions it can also be used to synthesise evidence for public health and health systems questions.

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