

ENCA Guidance for reviewing abstracts



This is guidance for reviewing and scoring scientific abstracts. The points are shown for guidance, and we suggest that for each question, you give a score up to the maximum shown. The maximum total is 20 points.

- Title
 - Does the title reflect the content of the abstract? 1 point
This means you know what the paper is about from the title.
- Introduction and Objectives
 - Is the research question clear and understandable? 2 points
This means you can see why the research is being carried out.
 - Is the scientific question 'sound'? 1 point
This means it is a valid question, with a scientific application.
 - Is this an original research question? 2 points
This means it is new and is not a repeat of something done before.
- Methods
 - Are the methods appropriate for the study? 2 point
This means the researchers have used the right approach to answer the study question.
 - Are the number of participants appropriate? 1 point
This means the number of people (or samples) in the study is enough to answer the question.
 - Is it clear how and where participants have been selected to avoid bias? 1 point
This means that participants have been selected or grouped fairly, and the researchers have been clear how they have done this.
 - Where two groups are compared, are they a fair comparison? 1 point
This means that any control or comparison group is described so you can see that they are a good control or comparison group. Note: Reduce score by 5 if a comparison group is used but is not appropriate for the study.
- Results
 - For quantitative research, are the results statistically significant? 1 point
If not, the findings are not scientifically robust. Note that if this is a study of just a few participants or samples, this does not apply.
 - For qualitative research, is it clear that the researchers have tried to avoid bias? 1 point
For example, have they used coding by two independent researchers.
 - Are the results clearly presented? 1 point
This means you can see what the results are easily, without having to re-read the abstract.
 - Are the overall results supported by the data analysis shown? 1 point
This means you can tell how the study findings have been worked out.
- Conclusions
 - Are the conclusions based on the results? 1 point
Conclusions and summaries should only be based on the study findings.
 - Are these conclusions important to the research, scientific or clinical community? 1 point
This means the findings help build our overall knowledge.
- Communication
 - Are the terms in the abstract clearly defined? 1 point
This means any unfamiliar terms and all acronyms or abbreviations are clearly explained.
 - Is the abstract clearly written and understandable? 1 point
This means you can understand the abstract when first reading it, and do not need to re-read or check details as you read through it.

- Value
 - Do these results represent a benefit to patients, either directly or indirectly? 1 point
This means these findings will be useful in future research, or to make a change in health policy. Will they be useful to improve clinical care?
 - Is this a topic that conference attendees, patients or patient organisations are very interested in hearing about? 1 point
This means that there is likely to be a lot of interest in these findings.
- Fraud, or incomprehensible
 - **If the abstract is incomprehensible (you cannot understand what they have done), is a copy of a study reported elsewhere, or appears to be fraudulent, you must give the minimum possible score and the abstract should be rejected. In all cases, add a comment to explain your decision.**

Patient, Parent or Public Involvement

Consider patient, parent or public involvement. This should be included as a response when submitting the initial abstract (it is unlikely to be recorded in the abstract itself). Award points where the study design or delivery include patient or parent involvement. 1 point

This means patients or parents are mentioned in the abstract as having a role in the study.

Maximum possible score: 20 points

Divide by 4 to give a score out of 5 (for PReS, for example).

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