

A Consumer-perspective Critical Reflection Tool

Why did we make the Consumer-perspective Critical Reflection Tool?

The aim of our *Consumer-perspective Reflection Appraisal Tool* is to provide a resource that allows users to evaluate and assess the quality of research from a consumer perspective. The tool has been designed for use on all research that impacts consumers. While designed for this context, the tool may also be adaptable for use in other areas where co-design and/or co-production is relevant. The tool can also be used to evaluate your own projects and in conducting peer review. This tool can be used in addition to other critical reflection tools, or critical appraisal tools. We encourage that the tool be used for all kinds of research, including quantitative studies (i.e., RCTs) and qualitative research.

The Consumer-perspective Reflection Tool's criteria have been developed based on consumer perspectives. The tool aims to make clear quality criteria and standards for research held by consumers and consumer academics in academic research. While some of the criteria listed in the tool may not be easy to discern or may not have been reported in publications, our tool is *aspirational*, meaning that these are areas that we believe should be reported upon in research.

We identified the following criteria as some of the overall, guiding priorities for assessing and evaluating quality research from a consumer perspective. A key priority when reflecting on the quality of research is the level and quality of consumer participation in decision-making within the research team - at all levels and stages of the project. Quality research has consumer expertise as the foundation for design and within the content, with consumer expertise informing analysis, interpretation, and dissemination.

A human rights approach was particularly important in terms of the frameworks and ideas used, and this is demonstrated throughout the tool, as well as in specific questions.

How do I use the Consumer-perspective Critical Reflection Tool?

The tool can be used by individuals, but we also recommend using the tool collectively. The tool can be useful and generative when done in collaboration with others as part of research teams when conducting reviews of literature or completing systematic reviews. The aim of the tool is to get you thinking critically about what quality research is.

Scoring system

We aim to not be too prescriptive, but to provide guidance for how the scoring system should be applied. Overall, we recommend that 'Yes' be selected when you are very satisfied with a criterion being met. 'Somewhat' should be used when you are somewhat satisfied that a criterion has been met. 'No' should be selected when it is demonstrable that the criteria have not been met. 'Not reported' should be used where information

is not reported. Comments should be added to the comments box providing context for your answers, or any notes or reflections you wish to make.

Yes = 2

Somewhat = 1

No/ Not reported = 0

Definitions

In this context, '**lived experience**' means people with direct, first-hand lived experience of the subject matter at hand, consumers. This is the context the tool has been developed for. '**Partnership**' - means an equal partnership, involving compromise and negotiation, see: Roper, Grey, & Cadogan, 'Co-production: Putting Principles into Practice in Mental Health Contexts' (2018).

Acknowledgement

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a. Was the research led by or conducted in partnership with people with consumers?

a.1. Was the research led by or conducted in partnership with consumers?

The following questions might help you identify tangible indicators that this was present throughout the research process.

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
1. Did the research team include consumers?				i.e., involvement of consumer researchers, consumer involvement is made clear to research participants, consumer researchers were in lead and/or hold decision-making roles ...
2. Was there evidence that there was thought involved as to what specific consumer expertise and experience was relevant?				i.e., there is critical reflection on who needed to be involved as part of the team, concerns about which consumers might benefit most, or be most harmed by the research are explored, perspectives of those most impacted are contained in the research ...
3. Was there evidence the research team sought out a range of different perspectives and included consumers representing a range of experiences and backgrounds?				i.e., research team reflects the diversity of lived experience/s and backgrounds within the consumer movement, all relevant lived experience expertise is valued as knowledge ...

Score: _____

a.2. Did consumers inform all aspects of the research process?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
4. Was there evidence that the topic or question was shaped by consumers?				i.e., there is evidence that consumers changed/shaped research questions or topic, consumers participated in the grant application process and design of research ...
5. Was there evidence consumers were partners or leaders in setting research agendas and in research design?				i.e., evidence of consumers in decision making, consumers participate or lead in designing research questions ...
6. Was there evidence consumers were partners or leaders in data collection?				i.e., consumers conducted interviews or focus groups, consumers received or gave training for team members in data collection, training in conducting interviews, running focus groups, or conducting surveys ...
7. Was there evidence consumers were partners or leaders in analysis and communication of findings?				i.e., consumers are credited as authors of research publications, led, or participated in the development communication and dissemination plans ...
8. Was there evidence consumers were partners or leaders in research evaluation?				

Score: _____

a.3. Were consumers positioned to make or meaningfully inform decision-making throughout the research process?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
9. Was there evidence consumers occupied a variety of positions across the research team?				i.e., consumers participated in reference groups, data collection and in the recruitment of participants, there were enough consumers 'in the room' to shift the balance of power ...

Score: _____

a.4. Were power differentials among the research team explored and ameliorated throughout the research process?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
10. Was there evidence that the time necessary to co-produce research was provided?				i.e., issues of time required for co-design or co-production are discussed, issues of timelines and resources required are discussed ..
11. Was there evidence that all researchers appropriately remunerated?				i.e. conditions of employment are reported upon transparently, consumer researchers are remunerated at parity with non-consumer researchers, remuneration level is appropriate for the work and role of consumer researchers ...
12. Was there evidence that researchers were employed in secure work?				i.e., consumers were employed on contracts for the life of the project, consumer researchers were employed as ongoing staff ..
13. Was there evidence that accessibility needs and reasonable adjustments were				i.e., meeting breaks were provided, shorter meeting lengths were negotiated, materials were provided in alternative formats ...

offered and provided to all team members to allow full participation?				
14. Was there evidence that processes of safety were considered and addressed with all team members?				i.e., strategies, frameworks, or protocols discussed to support safety of team members ...

Score: _____

a.5. Was support provided and the professional development of all team members promoted?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
15. Was there evidence that all team members had access to appropriate training and supervision?				i.e., opportunities to debrief and reflexive discussion after data collection is available for all team members ...
16. Was there evidence that non-consumer researchers engaged in their own reflection, development, and growth?				i.e., reflexive reporting, training, link to reports about research process, commentary on how non-consumers researchers might work differently in the future is provided ...
17. Was there evidence that consumers had access to professional networks?				i.e. consumer researchers were part of professional networks or organisations, consumer researchers presented research findings at conferences or other forums ...

Score: _____

a.6. Was the research underpinned by consumer expertise?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
18. Was there evidence that consumer researchers were able to draw on their lived experience?				i.e., it is made clear how lived experience expertise was utilised, there is evidence of changes made to the research topic and/or by consumer researcher involvement
19. Was there evidence of drawing on and incorporating consumer knowledge?				i.e., study cites the work of consumer researchers, consumers are understood as holders and producers of knowledge?
20. Does the research contribute to existing consumer knowledge and conceptual thinking?				i.e., the research is situated within the context of existing consumer movement debates/literature, scholarship. Contributions of consumer academics are cited ...

Score: _____

a.7. Were power differentials between researchers and participants ameliorated?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
21. Did participants' expertise inform the products of research?				i.e., products of research include direct quotes from participants, participants had opportunities to provide feedback in current

				or future research, the research process changed in response to participant feedback ...
22. Is there evidence that participants were valued?				i.e., participants report feeling valued in critical reflections or feedback, participants were remunerated appropriately for participating, participants were provided with information or referrals to support services, participants were given the opportunity to be involved in other ways after data collection, i.e., sharing their story in the media, advocacy

Score: _____

b. Is the methodological framework adherent to lived experience principles?

These questions and criteria are designed to help you assess whether the research methodology is consistent with consumer ethics

b.1. Do the methods consider and include subjective experience?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
23. Is there a balanced consideration between both subjective and other measurements of experience?				i.e., the lived experiences of consumers is centered within publications, regardless of research method used, direct quotes from consumers are provided ...

24. Does the paper contain specific quotes or perspectives of consumers?				
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Score: _____

b.2. Do the methods consider and include subjective experience?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
25. Was there evidence participants were paid appropriately and given choice regarding method of payment?				i.e., participants were paid in a timely way, were not given a constrained choices – for example, gift cards only usable at certain stores, payment appropriate for the level of commitment required by participants ...
26. Was there evidence participants were provided a choice around anonymity?				i.e., participants were provided opportunity to review their interview transcripts, given choice of pseudonyms ...

Score: _____

b.3. Does the research assert that people have legal capacity?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments

27. Does it assert that consumers always maintain the legal right to make decisions about their treatment and life?				i.e., human rights frameworks are used, reference is made to CRPD, and/or specific human rights ...
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Score: _____

b.4. Are other theories, assumptions and frameworks underpinning the research also emancipatory?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
28. Is the work interpreted through frameworks and concepts introduced or developed by people with lived experience, <i>as</i> developed by people with lived experience?				i.e. recovery as a concept is referred to as developed by people with lived experience (i.e., Patricia Deegan), not its co-opted iterations
29. Does it adopt a social model of disability?				i.e., disability is seen as the interaction between the person's impairment and the barriers of an unequal society, problems are located within social structures rather individuals ...
30. Does it question the dominance of biogenetic disease formulations?				i.e., a diverse range of frameworks for understanding emotional distress (spiritual, cultural, trauma theory, social models of distress) are acknowledged, importance of social determinates of mental health are articulated ...

31. Is it informed by the United Nations <i>Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i> (CRPD), or take a human rights-based approach?				i.e., specific rights or human rights documents drawn upon or referenced ...
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Score: _____

b.5. Did the research include people most impacted, and impacted in different ways by the subject matter?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
32. Is intersectionality considered?				i.e., evidence that multiple layers of disadvantage are considered, i.e., gender, race, Indigeneity, migration status, disability, regionality/rurality, research is informed by anti-oppressive frameworks and ideas ...
33. Is there thought given to who may have been included or excluded from participating in the research?				i.e., critical reflection regarding the reach of recruitment materials, recruitment methods, community language translation, evidence that there was reflection on method of engagement with communities often excluded from research (or over-researched) ...

Score: _____

a. Is the content critical and reflexive?

c.1. Does the research align with consumer ideas about what constitutes ethical and quality research?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
34. Are the paper's contribution and findings situated within the context of contributions to knowledge from the consumer movement?				i.e., consumer researchers are cited, debates and ideas from the consumer movement are engaged with ...
35. Did the researchers situate themselves and reflect on their positionality in the research?				i.e., consumer researchers and non-consumer researchers alike reflected on their standpoints/positionality in relation to the research and other reports and publications ...

Score: _____

c.2. Does the paper identify key terms and include a discussion about language and reasons for choice of language?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments

36. Are terms used to refer to people explained, or rationale provided for why they are adopted?				i.e., terms adopted like 'consumer' or 'lived experience' are clearly defined, rationale is provided for choice of language ...
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Score: Does it contribute to anti-oppressive frameworks/practices?

c.3. Was there critical reflection of the research process?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
37. Was there reflection on how the research process could have been improved to increase integrity of consumer involvement?				i.e., there were recommendations for improving the research process in future research, opportunities for increasing consumer involvement/leadership were acknowledged ...
38. Was there honest reflection on how the process could move towards co-production or consumer leadership?				i.e., there is reflection of missed opportunities for deeper involvement, barriers to opportunities for involvement are identified ...

Score:

c.4. Are the findings examined from a consumer perspective?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
39. Does the research explicitly cite the work of other consumer researchers or those writing from a lived experience perspective?				i.e., consumer perspectives on findings are integrated across analysis and discussion ...
40. Were consumer perspective structures reported on, such as consumer advisory groups that examined aspects of the research?				i.e., detail outlines how consumers were engaged in the project ...
41. Was there evidence of connecting with the consumer/ex-patient/survivor movement?				i.e., consumer peak bodies and organisations were consulted on aspects of the research ...

Score: _____

b. Does it contribute to systemic change?

d.1. Does the research develop consumer knowledge and advance the goals of the consumer movement?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
42. Does it advocate for or amplify the voice of consumers?				i.e., the experiences of consumers are centered and amplified in publications ...

43. Was there evidence the research develops consumer knowledge and supports the development of consumer knowledge?				i.e., consumers researchers receive opportunities to learn from other consumer and non-consumer academics, there was evidence of professional development and up-skilling for consumers (researchers and participants) ...
44. Are recommendations for social change included?				i.e., findings are linked to the need for social change or reform/s, publications further campaigns, the research can the research be used to inform policy submissions or as a tool for consumer organisations in advocacy ...
45. Is there a plan to implement research findings and recommendations?				i.e., clear actions arise based on findings
46. Does the research elaborate on the value of consumer leadership in research, or on partnering with consumer researchers?				i.e., there is reflection on the benefits/reliability of research through consumer leadership and/or partnership, consumer leadership and/or partnership is promoted and encouraged ...

Score: _____

d.3. How accessible is the paper or study to consumers?

	Yes	Somewhat	Not reported	Comments
47. Is there a community report and a plain language summary of the findings?				i.e., findings available digitally and physically in a summary format ...
48. Is the paper freely available?				i.e., the research is available through Open Access ...
49. Is there a plan to disseminate the research through methods to the community?				i.e., do consumer organisations and networks receive a copy of the researcher, is there an event to discuss the findings with consumers ...

Score: _____