

Assessment Framework & Weighting System

Social Science Works: Second Opinion Traffic Light Rating Framework						
Thematic Area	Criteria	Red	Red-Yellow	Yellow	Yellow-Green	Green
Research Design Check (double weight: max 8 points)	Is the research design appropriate for the question?	A red research design is representative of a deeply flawed design. Red research design will use inappropriate tools for the question at hand. A red research design is likely use data and information that cannot address the research question. Similarly, a red research design will have methodological flaws in its execution either in part or as a whole. For red research designs using survey data, a red rating indicates missing data.	Red-yellow indicators suggest a research design somewhere between the two. Important: red-yellow indicators can only be given to research designs that do not deliberately misled or conceal information and data.	Research design marked yellow indicates research design that has some flaws. In terms of appropriateness, a yellow indicator suggests that the design uses outdated methods or methods from another discipline, without adequately explaining its reasons for ignoring more accepted design methods. For research that uses survey data, a yellow indicator suggests that the survey questions do not sufficiently address the research question.	Yellow-green indicators suggest a research design somewhere between the two.	A green indicator for research design indicates a well-put together research question and methodology. A green indicator can be given to research which uses discipline-appropriate, contemporary sampling and research methods, or to research that clearly lays out the need for an innovative research method to address the research question. For research using survey data, a green indicator suggests comprehensive and well-sampled
	Has the research question been properly conceptualised?					
	Is the method applied correctly?					

				Important: only where surveys omit information can a red indicator be given.		dataset with ambiguities and data-cleaning explained clearly.
Statistical Check (single weight: max score 4 points) *This has been omitted for this paper*	Are there omissions in the survey process?	A red rating indicates that the statistical data is significantly flawed. A red indicator can be given for research that deliberately misleads or misrepresents the data. Any mistakes or misrepresentations in the statistical data will be flagged red.	Red-yellow indicators suggest the quality of the statistical procedures somewhere between the two. Important: red-yellow indicators can only be given to statistical procedures that do not deliberately misled or conceal information and data.	Statistical data marked yellow indicates that there are problems with the data, but that the data is not misleading. For example, representations of the data may be unhelpful or unclear, and choices about the types of data included in the study may not be sufficiently explained. Yellow suggests that the method is not completely appropriate for evaluating the relations in the data.	Yellow-green indicators suggest the statistical data falls somewhere between the two.	A green indicator for statistical methods indicates a clearly laid out, comprehensive and accurate representation of the statistical data. Green indicators suggest that the models are sensible, clear and accurately measured.
	Which measuring instruments have been used? Are these described? Are these problematic?					

Assumptions Check (double weight: max score 8 points)	Do the instruments meet the quality criteria? (Objectivity / reliability / validity)	A research paper marked red for assumptions check suggests that there is bias in the underlying assumptions of the research. The research fails to indicate its assumptions before beginning analysis or inadequately explores them. Alternative assumptions are not considered.	Red-yellow indicators suggest the paper's assumptions are somewhere between the two.	Where a paper is marked yellow for its assumptions, the paper likely examines and expresses some of its underlying assumptions, but it's not completely rigorous in exploring the implications of those, or the assumptions not taken into consideration. Alternatively, a paper with a yellow for assumptions can fail to fully consider the implications of the assumptions in drawing up its research design which might otherwise be solid.	Yellow-green indicators suggest a research design somewhere between the two.	A green indicator is a sign that the assumptions that underline the paper have been rigorously explored and defended and that alternative assumptions have been considered. A green indicator suggests that potential bias has been acknowledged and steps have been taken to address it.
	Are there alternative assumptions that would lead to other conclusions with the same data and concepts?					
Source Check (single	Have the assumptions lead to inadequate	A paper marked red for sources suggests that the paper	Red-yellow indicators suggest sources	Yellow indicates that the paper offers a generally	Yellow-green indicators suggest the	Green indicates that the paper gives a clear, balanced and

weight: max score 4 points)	decisions in the research process?	overlooks important work relevant to the field or research question or else misunderstands or misuses relevant research. Red can also indicate that the sources presented offer only a one-sided presentation of the current state of the literature.	fall somewhere between the two. Important: red-yellow indicators can only be given to sources that do not deliberately misled or conceal information and data.	balanced view of the current literature but may omit an important piece of the contemporary picture. Likewise, a yellow rating can be given for a paper that offers generally good analysis of the current literature but misinterprets a substantial contribution to the debate.	sources are somewhere between the two.	comprehensive overview of the current literature that is relevant to the problem at hand and demonstrates a solid and consistent interpretation of the current state of research.
	Do the sources cited say what the author says they do?					
	Have the sources been taken from a one-sided discourse and relevant sources were systematically omitted?					
Cogency Check (double weight: max score 8 points)	Has major research been ignored? Why?	Red indicates that there are serious flaws in the argumentation presented. Definitions are missing or inconsistent, the conclusions do not properly follow from the data presented or the assumptions and the implications of the study are	Red-yellow indicators suggest the paper's argumentation falls somewhere between the two.	Yellow indicates that mostly the paper is logically and consistently argued, but that there are logical leaps or some minor inconsistencies in definitions leading to some difficulty understanding the	Yellow-green indicators suggest the argumentation falls somewhere between the two.	Green in this field suggests that the conclusions of the paper are highly justifiable, logically argued and rooted in consistent and accepted definitions. The political and social consequences of the paper are clearly
	Are the justifications coherent? Consistent? Correct?					
	Are the definitions used consistently?					

		exaggerated or minimised.		conclusions of the paper.		articulated and justified.
Funding Check (single weight: max score 4 points)	Are the required conclusions/political consequences of the study justified?	Red indicates that the funder of the research is not acknowledged or is deliberately obscured. Implications from potential bias are not acknowledged.	Red-yellow indicators suggest the paper's funding acknowledgment is somewhere between the two. Important: red-yellow indicators can only be given to research that does not deliberately mislead or conceal information and data on funders.	For a yellow rating, a paper will clearly acknowledge their funding sources but may fail to fully acknowledge the role of the funders in the paper or the potential biases that are part of the funder's agenda.	Yellow-green indicators suggest the argumentation falls somewhere between the two.	Green indicates that the authors acknowledge the funder and the funder's role in the completion of the research. Additionally, green papers will be transparent about their funder's agenda and acknowledge the potential biases that come with that.
	Has the funder of this research been acknowledged?					
	Have potential biases been explored?					