Table 1: Core principles of quality assessment for main study designs:

Study Type	Criteria
Randomised controlled trials	Quality scoring: • Sequence generation - was the allocation sequence adequately generated? • Allocation concealment – was allocation adequately concealed? • Blinding of participants -was adequate knowledge of the allocated intervention adequately concealed from outcome assessors? • Incomplete outcome data – was this adequately addressed for each outcome (this includes differential attrition between groups)? • Selective outcome reporting – are reports of the study free of suggestion of selective outcome reporting?
Cross-sectional studies/surveys	Quality scoring: • Selected subjects are representative (all eligible or a random sample) • 80% or more agreed to participate • Exposure/outcome status ascertained in a standardised way
Qualitative studies	Assessed on seven criteria as 'yes', 'no','partly' or 'unclear' Overall reliability of study assessed as high, medium or low. One of more 'no' value for first five categories = low , at least 4/5 of the first 5 categories marked as yes = medium, all of the first five categories marked 'yes and no categories marked as 'no'= high • Scope and purpose e.g. clearly stated question, clear outline of theoretical framework • Design e.g. discussion of why particular approach/methods chosen • Sample e.g. adequate description of sample used and how sample identified and recruited • Data collection e.g. systematic documentation of tools/guides/researcher role, recording methods explicit • Analysis e.g. documentation of analytic tools/methods used, evidence of rigorous/systematic analysis • Reliability and validity e.g. presentation of original data, how categories/concepts/themes developed and were they checked by more than one author, interpretation, how theories developed, triangulation with other sources • Generalisability. e.g. sufficient evidence for generalisability or limits made clear by author(s)