

**HCS Technical Team  
Literature Review  
Protocol**  
**Internal Standard Operating  
Procedure (SOP)**

**V00.1 (Draft)  
September  
2024**

# DOCUMENT CONTROL SHEET

## KEY INFORMATION

<b>Title</b>	SOP Literature Review Protocol
<b>Date Published / Issued</b>	
<b>Date Effective From</b>	
<b>Version No.</b>	V00.1 (Draft)
<b>Document Type</b>	Standard Operational Procedure
<b>Document Status</b>	
<b>Author</b>	HCS Technical Team
<b>Owner</b>	NHSScotland Assure
<b>Approver</b>	
<b>Approval Date</b>	
<b>Contact</b>	
<b>File Location</b>	

## REVISION HISTORY

VERSION:	DATE:	SUMMARY OF CHANGES:	NAME:

## DISTRIBUTION

NAME	TITLE	VERSION	ISSUE DATE

## APPROVALS

NAME	TITLE	VERSION	ISSUE DATE	APPROVED DATE

## ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

Any relevant applicable legislation, policies, or guidance.

DOCUMENT TITLE	DOCUMENT FILE PATH / URL



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# 1. Introduction

## Objective

This SOP guides the completion of protocols:

- For systematic literature reviews, ensuring alignment with the [PRISMA2020 checklist](#) for systematic literature reviews.
- For scoping reviews, ensuring alignment with the PRISMA checklist for scoping reviews ([PRISMA-ScR](#)) as outlined by Tricco et al. (2018).
- For Rapid Reviews.

## Responsibilities

- Lead Author: Holds primary responsibility for drafting all the sections of the protocol using the provided template and incorporating inputs from supporting authors and subject matter experts. Use the data gathering form to complete the protocol.
- Supporting Authors: Support in the development of the protocol.
- Lead/ Principal HCS: Conducts a 'sense check' of the completed protocol to ensure its coherence and alignment with the review objectives.
- Subject Matter Expert/ Commissioner: Contributes insights for the development of the protocol and grants final approval upon its completion.

## How to read and use the SOP

Throughout this SOP, you will find text in italicised brackets. These sections are **author guidelines** – specific instructions or notes intended to guide authors through the process of completing the protocol. Pay special attention to these as they provide crucial insights and tips for effectively using the SOP.

This SOP includes several segments of pre-written text, designed for easy “copy and paste” to save time and ensure consistency across different protocols. These segments are crafted to align with the common requirements of scoping and systematic literature reviews. However, it is important to tailor these segments to fit the specifics of each

review. Therefore, while using pre-written text, make necessary amendments to reflect the unique aspects and focus of the topic.

Follow the SOP in the order it is presented. Each section builds upon the previous one, ensuring a logical flow and comprehensive understanding. It is important that each step is understood and correctly implemented to maintain the quality and integrity of the review. If any part of the SOP is unclear, seek clarification from another HCS.

## Review title and timescale

### Review title

*[Add title of the review followed by the type of literature review]. Edit set text as appropriate.*

Title of the review: A scoping review

### Anticipated start and completion date

Commencement of literature search:

*[Specify the date when the literature search phase begins. Format: Day (as a number), Month (in words), Year (as a number). Example: 15 January 2024].*

Anticipated completion date:

*[For protocol registration in Prospero, a completion date is required. While this date is not mandatory for other platforms, providing an estimated completion date is considered good practice. If an exact date cannot be determined at this stage, please indicate 'To Be Confirmed' (TBC)].*

### Recurrence of meetings

*[Indicate the frequency and length of meetings agreed upon with the Subject Matter Expert. For example: Once a fortnight for 20 minutes]*

## Review team details

### Contact person and email

*[Indicate the name of the lead author followed by her/his email address]*

## Review team members

*[Add as many rows as required. The following is an example]*

Name	Role in the review	Job Title	Affiliation
	Lead author	HCS Advanced	NHSS Assure
	Supporting author	HCS	NHSS Assure
	Supporting author	Principal HCS	NHSS Assure

## Collaborators

### Subject Matter Experts

*[Add as many rows as required]*

Name	Role in the review	Job Title	Affiliation
	Main point contact		
	Second point of contact		
	Advisory role		

### Working Groups

*[Include the table below if a working group collaborates with the review. An example is provided to illustrate how to fill in the table accurately. Add as many rows as required]*

Name of working group	Number of members	Expertise covered	Affiliations
Design Healthcare Facilities Sort live working group	6	2 Architects, 3 Nurses, 1 Estates and Facilities	NHSS Assure, NHS Grampian, Scottish Government

*Note the latest version of the protocol will be attached to the literature review final report as an appendix. It is essential for the Lead Author to obtain verbal consent from the individuals mentioned in the protocol.*

*When registering the protocol on platforms like Prospero or Open Science Framework, the names of collaborators should not be included. In these cases, only the general title and affiliation will be reported.*

## Conflict of interest

*Only external individuals who are not part of NHS or Scottish Government (SG) must disclose any possible conflicts of interest. It is the responsibility of the Subject Matter Expert (main point of contact) to issue the conflict-of-interest declaration form. If there is not conflict of interest, the following declaration should be included:*

[There is no conflict of interest in this review].

## Review methods

Edit set text as appropriate:

A preliminary search was conducted in [specify the databases/platforms consulted, for example, Scopus, Web of Science, Prospero, etc.] and no current or ongoing [*indicate the type of literature review*] on the topic were identified.

*[If there are any existing systematic reviews/scoping reviews, it should be specified how the proposed review will differ].*

## Rational for the review

*[Indicate the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. Use information provided in the Information Gathering Form].*

## Aim of the review and question(s):

**Aim:**

*[Indicate the aim of the literature review that captures the core elements of the inclusion criteria – e.g., population or participants, concepts, and context; or other relevant key elements used to conceptualise the review questions and/ or objectives. For example:*

*This scoping review aims to systematically explore and map the literature on the use of mass timber as a structural element and external cladding material in healthcare, institutional, and multi-occupancy residential buildings. It will examine the contexts in which mass timber is utilised, the variety of mass timber materials employed, and the breadth of aspects covered in its application. These aspects include, but are not limited to, structural integrity, fire resistance, acoustic properties, water ingress, infection control, infestation, and sustainability. Furthermore, the review will delve into available information regarding potential risks, benefits, and mitigation strategies associated with these aspects of mass timber usage.]*

*[The core elements of your review are determined by the research question you choose to pursue. To help frame your question and establish the inclusion criteria's core elements, consider adopting one of the following or similar question frameworks. Below*

are some examples of such frameworks. Note for scoping reviews, the most common framework used to guide the research question formulation and review process is the PCC framework.].

Framework	Dimensions
PICOs	Population, Intervention, Comparator, Outcomes, Study design
PCC	Population, Concept, Context
ECLIPSE	Expectation, Client Group, Location, Impact, Professionals, Service
PEO	Patient/ Population/ Problem, Exposure, Outcomes/ Themes
SPIDER	Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research type
SPICE	Setting, Population/Perspective, Intervention, Evaluation

**Review question:**

[Insert the necessary number of questions, keeping in mind that a single question might be sufficient. For adding questions, utilise the ‘HFS RQ list’ font].

- RQ1.
- RQ2.

**Searches**

[Specify all the databases that will be searched. This should include general academic databases, subject-specific databases, and, if applicable, databases for standards and technical reports. Additionally, mention any databases used for sourcing grey literature. Note that we do not include theses in our literature reviews due to the extensive time required to review them, and we operate under the assumption that the research conducted for these theses has been published in the form of peer-reviewed journals].

Edit set text as appropriate:

**Databases:**

General academic databases

- Scopus (year), Web of Science (Core Collection)

Biomedical and health sciences databases

- Embase (Ovid), Pubmed, CINAHL (Ebsco), PsycINFO (Ovid from 1967)



Engineering and construction databases

- IEEE Xplore, Compendex (Engineering Village)

Sustainability and environmental science databases:

- GreenFILE (EBSCOhost)

Databases for standards and technical reports

- Barbour Index

Databases for grey literature:

- OpenGrey, Health Business Elite, Google (first 50-100 hits).

### **Key Journals:**

*[List any specific journals that will be consulted for this review. If no specific journals are targeted, this section can be omitted].*

### **Manual Searches:**

*[Indicate whether manual searches will be conducted. Backward citation searching involves reviewing the reference lists of all included studies and other identified articles to identify potential studies or evidence. Forward citation searching involves using indexes such as Google Scholar to identify which studies have cited a specific study]. Edit set text as appropriate:*

In addition to database searches, backward and forward citation searching will be conducted to identify additional studies not captured through database searches. Also, manual searches will be conducted to identify white reports, case studies, technical documents from manufacturers, construction companies, contractors, and recognised organisations, and relevant standards.

### **Contact with study authors:**

*[Specify if there will be contact with study authors for clarification or additional information]. Edit set text as appropriate:*

The review process will involve contacting authors of studies, manufacturers, and organisations to obtain additional details or clarifications as needed.

### **Re-running searches:**

*[Indicate if there is a plan to re-run the search prior to the final synthesis.*

*Edit set text as appropriate:*

For comprehensive coverage and best practice, should the review extend beyond a year, the search process will be revisited prior to the final synthesis to ensure the inclusion of the most recent studies and findings.

## Eligible criteria

### Inclusion criteria

- [For defining the inclusion criteria, follow the components of the review question(s) framework - e.g., population or participants, concepts, and context) or other relevant key elements used to conceptualise the review questions and/ or objectives. List all the inclusion criteria using bullet points].

- *[Type of literature to be included]*. Edit set as appropriate:

The review will include peer-reviewed and non-peer reviewed empirical research, expert opinion (i.e. commentary articles, opinion and editorials pieces), guidance from recognised organisations, standards, conference proceedings, manufactures documentation, technical reports, working papers.

- *[Specify the language(s) of the studies to be included]*. Edit set text as appropriate:

Studies published in [specify language(s)] will be included.

- *[Indicate the date range for the studies and provide justification if it deviates from the standard 20-year range]*. Edit set text as appropriate:

Studies published since [insert year] will be included. *[Provide justification if the date range differs from the standard 20 years]*.

- *[State whether unpublished studies will be considered in the review and provide the rationale for your decision]*. Edit set text as appropriate:

The review will aim to locate both published and unpublished studies. *[If excluding unpublished studies, provide the rationale here]*

### Exclusion criteria

*[Specify any exclusion criteria for the review that are not implicitly covered by the inclusion criteria. Ensure that these criteria do not overlap with the inclusion criteria. List all the exclusion criteria using bullet points].*

## Search strategy

[To refine the search strategy, conduct an initial search in selected databases to identify relevant articles and the terms or phrases they use. Focus on index terms, keywords, titles, and abstracts].

Edit set text as appropriate:

An initial limited search was conducted in [specify databases, e.g., MEDLINE, CINAHL] to identify pertinent studies on the topic and to gather search terms useful in developing the search strategy. This list of search terms, further refined by the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and through consultation, will guide the Healthcare Scientist Team in developing the search strategy. It is important to note that this list is not exhaustive. The finalised search strategy will include all identified keywords and index terms and will be tailored to suit each included database and/ or evidence source.

[In the table below, list all the search terms identified. Add as many columns as necessary to organise the terms, and if possible, categorise them by components, such as population, setting, intervention, etc. or columns 1, 2, 3]

Note: Terms within word groups combined using “or”; word groups combined using “and”

Search terms (1)	Search terms (2)	

### Study selection

*[Specify the bibliographic software or citation management system used for this review. Detail the number of reviewers involved in the first and second screening phases and whether the screening will be conducted independently. Describe the process for resolving disagreements and the system or mechanism for recording decisions].*

Edit set text as appropriate:

Studies identified through the search strategy from the selected databases will be exported to EndNote [insert version]. The lead reviewer will be responsible for this initial step and the subsequent removal of duplicate entries. Once deduplication is complete, references from EndNote will be transferred to an Excel spreadsheet, which will serve as the primary tool for recording screening decisions.

The review process will involve two stages of screening. Initially, a first screening will be conducted, involving reading the titles and abstracts of all studies to assess their relevance. This will be followed by a second screening, where the full texts of potentially eligible studies will be examined in detail. Both screening stages will be performed by [specify number of reviewers] working [independently or collaboratively, as per decided for this protocol]. Any disagreements arising between the reviewers during any stage of the selection process will be addressed through discussion. A third reviewer will be called upon to resolve these conflicts if a consensus cannot be reached.

The search results and the study inclusion process will be reported in full using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses flow diagram.

## Data extraction

*[Specify the number of reviewers involved in the data extraction process].*

*[Specify the data to be extracted from the selected studies and sources. It is important to note that scoping reviews typically do not focus on study results and therefore study results should not be extracted from the sources. However, if they are intended as precursors to systematic reviews, results could be included with clear rationale and justification].*

*[Provide a draft extraction form for each type of data. This should be developed by the lead author and shared with the supporting author. The data extraction form needs to be pilot tested on each type of evidence source, such as empirical studies, text and opinion, guidelines, etc. included in the review].*

*[Note that for scoping reviews the extraction process can evolve to capture new and different data items that were not pre-specified in the draft extraction tool. If additional items that were not initially outlined are extracted, it should be clearly stated in the final report, including a deviation from the protocol and a rationale for why this occurred].*

Edit set text as appropriate:

A draft extraction form is provided in Appendix X. This draft data extraction form will be revised during the data extraction process and modified if required. Any modification will be reported as deviations in the final report and documented in the protocol.

## Risk of bias (quality) assessment

For scoping reviews:

*[Quality appraisal is usually not conducted in scoping reviews, adhering to the methodological guidance from the Joanne Briggs Institute for Scoping Reviews. If quality appraisal is to be conducted, a rationale explaining this decision should be provided, along with the checklists to be used. Otherwise, this section should be marked as 'N/A'].*

For rapid and systematic literature reviews:

The checklists used to assess the methodological quality/ risk of bias of the reports include: The Joanne Bridge Institute for case report, case series, case control, cohort, cross-sectional analytical, prevalence, text and opinion, quasi-experimental, randomised controlled trial, and systematic literature reviews; the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) for qualitative studies; and the AACODS for grey literature.

Guidance documents will be initially assessed using the Appraisal of Guidelines for Research & Evaluation (AGREE) methodology. If the score is under 60%, the guidance will be classified as grey literature and assessed using the AACODS checklist. Mandatory or legislative documents are exempt from assessment. Experimental non-human studies will not be assessed due to the absence of a suitable checklist.

## Strategy for data synthesis

For scoping reviews:

*[There are two approaches for conducting a scoping review: inductive (i.e. it is data-driven and starts without predefined frameworks); and abductive (i.e. mapping existing research against the chosen framework to identify gaps, inconsistencies, or areas that are under-researched.)*

*The data from the review can be presented in various formats, such as graphical representations, diagrams, or tables. Please specify the chosen methods of data presentation or mapping techniques. A narrative summary will be provided alongside the tabulated and/or charted results. This summary will explain the connection between the results and the review's objectives and questions].*

For rapid and systematic literature reviews:

*[Data will be often synthesised using a qualitative narrative approach. If a quantitative analysis can be conducted for the review, then the option of conducting a meta-analysis should be explored. The Joanne Briggs Institute guidance ([refer to the link](#)) provides different approaches for data synthesis].*

## Review general information

### Dissemination plans

*[Outline the strategy for disseminating key findings from the review to relevant audiences. Include any plans for knowledge transfer or implementation activities that extend beyond the publication of the final report on the NHSScotland Assure Website (e.g. academic publications, workshops, conference presentations, stakeholder meetings, professional networks)].*