

Rapid Review Option for Research Curriculum

A rapid review is a variation of a systematic review that balances time constraints with considerations in bias¹. While a rapid review is a systematic literature review search with defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, it is not as comprehensive as a systematic review (may exclude grey literature, may have limits on years and language, done by one reviewer) and can therefore be completed within 1-6 months^{1,2}.

Learners completing a rapid review as their research project can use the following guidelines for completing their deliverables in each phase. These guidelines are from the VCU Libraries rapid review protocol¹:

- **Phase 1:** narrative literature review on the topic of research interest and initial development of a research question. The narrative review is the deliverable in Phase 1.
 - The narrative literature review is a broad approach to the topic and should inform the specific aspect of the topic of interest to be explored by the rapid review.
 - The specific aspect of the research topic guides the development of the research question (use FINER or PICOT criteria).
 - Example: narrative review to explore a medical indication and the various surgical options for it (Phase 1 deliverable). Followed by rapid review which addresses research question specific to one surgical option and includes more stringent criteria (Phases 2- 3).

- **Phase 2:** develop a protocol for the rapid review as outlined in the VCU Libraries guide at <https://guides.library.vcu.edu/rapidreview> and execute your literature search. The review protocol is the Phase 2 deliverable and will be assessed using the research proposal rubric.
 - Your research question should be finalized with a clear scope.
 - Define the parameters for the literature search (e.g. resources, inclusion/exclusion criteria, tools for appraising literature).
 - Identify and discuss biases associated with your review protocol.
 - Determine best method for documenting literature search, e.g. using a review matrix to keep track of studies to be included in review.
 - Plan your search and citation management. Consult with a librarian at the Health Sciences Library if you need assistance.
 - Execute search and store citations.
 - *Note:* you do not need to write a section about ethical considerations as this does not apply. You do, however, have to make an explicit statement regarding the principles governing ethical practices in research when it involves human participants or animals to demonstrate your understanding of their relevance.

¹ <https://guides.library.vcu.edu/rapidreview>

² https://www.cadth.ca/media/events/Andrea-Tricco_RR-vs-Systematic-Reviews_Feb-4-2015.pdf

- **Phase 3:** complete the rapid review. The write-up of the review is the Phase 3 deliverable.
 - Screen search results based on review protocol.
 - Critically appraise studies to identify ones to be included. Use a summary table, review matrix or other tool as determined in your review protocol to track studies.
 - Write-up evidence synthesis. The assessment rubric for the data analysis report will be used following the structure below:
 - Introduction and research question
 - Methodology – rapid review protocol (as per Phase 2)
 - Data analysis – discuss implications for study design/methods
 - What methods are most commonly used in studies?
 - What are the most common outcomes analyzed?
 - Is there a specific patient population that is not well-studied?
 - Interpretation of findings
 - Discuss possible limitations and bias of your review

- **Phase 4:** knowledge translation of the rapid review.
 - Examples: submission of manuscript for publication, conference, presentation at discipline research day or local interest group.

Rapid review resources

Rapid Review Introduction (Cochrane Library): <https://training.cochrane.org/resource/introduction-rapid-reviews>

Systematic Reviews vs Rapid Reviews: https://www.cadth.ca/media/events/Andrea-Tricco_RR-vs-Systematic-Reviews_Feb-4-2015.pdf

Rapid Reviews HLWIKI: http://hlwiki.slais.ubc.ca/index.php/Rapid_reviews

Rapid Review methodologies: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5123411/>