Designing Evaluations to Meet
What Works Clearinghouse™ Standards

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Overview

• What is the What Works Clearinghouse™?
• What are WWC Standards?
• How Does the WWC Review a Study?
• Considerations to Keep in Mind
• Connecting with the WWC and TA Resources
What is the What Works Clearinghouse™?

• Since 2002, the WWC has been an initiative of ED’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

• The WWC reviews, rates, and summarizes original studies of the effectiveness of education interventions (policies, programs, practices, or products)

• The WWC does not rate
  • Qualitative studies
  • Descriptive studies
  • Studies that re-analyze or synthesize others’ data
  • The quality of interventions (as opposed to studies of interventions)

Reviews of studies are documented at whatworks.ed.gov; findings are reported from studies that meet WWC standards
What Works Clearinghouse™ Standards

• Developed by panels of experts for different types of study designs:
  • Group designs (randomized controlled trials and quasi-experimental designs)
  • Regression discontinuity designs
  • Single case designs

• Focus on internal validity of estimates (whether an estimated impact is valid or likely to be biased)

• Applied by teams of certified reviewers using a review protocol to give studies one of 3 ratings:
NOTE: the *sign*, *size*, and *statistical significance* of the estimated effect of the intervention are reported by the WWC but do *not* affect the WWC study rating.
Identifying the Treatment, Counterfactual, and Research Design

• What is the intervention of interest for your impact study?
• Is the intervention received by all or only some of the individuals served by the project?
• How will a comparison group not receiving the intervention be formed?
  – Lottery
  – Measure of need
  – Matched comparison group
Identifying Outcomes and Baseline Characteristics Needed for WWC Review

• Are the relevant outcomes you expect to measure eligible for review under a WWC protocol, such as the
  • Review of Individual Studies Protocol
  • English Language Learners Evidence Review Protocol
  • Teacher Training, Evaluation, and Compensation Evidence Review Protocol

• Do you expect to collect the pre-intervention data required by a WWC protocol to establish baseline equivalence?
For more Information:

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Connect with the WWC and TA Resources

• The WWC Home Page

• The WWC Help Desk
  http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/ContactUs.aspx

• Follow the WWC
  http://facebook.com/whatworksclearinghouse
  https://twitter.com/WhatWorksED

• TA Resources for Evaluators Planning Rigorous Impact Studies
  • https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/projects/evaluationTA.asp