

# Evaluating Your Own SLR Process

This section is distinct from [Appraise Study Quality](#), which assesses the rigor of the *primary studies* you have included. This section asks a different question: how rigorously did *you* conduct the review itself?

## Overview

Quality appraisal tools such as [CASP](#), [MMAT](#), and [JBI](#) look outward: they help you evaluate the studies in your dataset. The checklist and scoring rubric on this page look *inward*: they help you evaluate your own review process against recognized best practices.

The items below are adapted from [Petersen, Vakkalanka, and Kuzniarz \(2015\)](#), who derived them from a systematic mapping study of how SLRs and systematic mapping studies are conducted in practice. Use this rubric in two ways:

- **During planning:** as a checklist of actions to build into your protocol.
- **Before submission:** as a retrospective audit to identify gaps in your process and to disclose them transparently in your methods chapter.

This rubric was developed in the context of software engineering research. The core dimensions; motivating the review, search strategy, search evaluation, extraction/classification, and validity; apply equally to business and management SLRs. Items that refer to software-engineering-specific classification schemes may be skipped if they are not relevant to your discipline.

---

# Part 1: Activities Checklist

The table below lists the 26 actions identified by Petersen et al. (2015) as relevant to a rigorous systematic review or mapping study. Work through each row and mark whether the action was taken (✓), partially taken (~), or not taken (✗). This produces a ratio score: count your ✓ marks and divide by 26 (or by the number of applicable items).

| <b>P</b> | <b>A</b>  | <b>T</b> |
|----------|-----------|----------|
| <b>h</b> | <b>ct</b> | <b>a</b> |
| <b>a</b> | <b>io</b> | <b>k</b> |
| <b>s</b> | <b>n</b>  | <b>e</b> |
| <b>e</b> |           | <b>n</b> |
|          |           | <b>?</b> |

**M  
o  
t  
i  
v  
a  
t  
e  
t  
h  
e  
r  
e  
v  
i  
e  
w**

M  
o  
t  
i  
v  
a  
t  
e  
t  
h  
e  
n  
e  
e  
d  
a  
n  
d  
r  
e  
l  
e  
v  
a  
n  
c  
e  
o  
f  
t  
h  
e  
r  
e  
v  
i  
e  
w

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| D<br>e<br>f<br>i<br>n<br>e<br>o<br>b<br>j<br>e<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>v<br>e<br>s<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>q<br>u<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>s |  |
|--|--|

C  
o  
n  
s  
u  
l  
t  
w  
i  
t  
h  
t  
h  
e  
t  
a  
r  
g  
e  
t  
a  
u  
d  
i  
e  
n  
c  
e  
(e  
.g  
,  
s  
u  
p  
e  
r  
v  
i  
s  
o  
r,  
d  
o  
m  
a  
i  
n  
e  
x  
p  
e  
r  
t)  
t  
o  
r  
e  
f  
i  
n  
e  
q  
u  
e  
s  
t  
i  
o

|          |    |  |
|----------|----|--|
| <b>S</b> | C  |  |
| <b>e</b> | o  |  |
| <b>a</b> | n  |  |
| <b>r</b> | d  |  |
| <b>c</b> | u  |  |
| <b>h</b> | ct |  |
| <b>s</b> | a  |  |
| <b>t</b> | d  |  |
| <b>r</b> | at |  |
| <b>a</b> | a  |  |
| <b>t</b> | b  |  |
| <b>e</b> | as |  |
| <b>g</b> | e  |  |
| <b>y</b> | se |  |
|          | ar |  |
|          | c  |  |
|          | h  |  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| A<br>p<br>p<br>l<br>y<br>s<br>n<br>o<br>w<br>b<br>a<br>l<br>l<br>s<br>a<br>m<br>p<br>l<br>i<br>n<br>g<br>(b<br>a<br>c<br>k<br>w<br>a<br>r<br>d<br>a<br>n<br>d/<br>o<br>r<br>f<br>o<br>r<br>w<br>a<br>r<br>d) |  |
|--|--|

C  
o  
n  
d  
u  
c  
t  
a  
m  
a  
n  
u  
a  
l  
s  
e  
a  
r  
c  
h  
o  
f  
k  
e  
y  
j  
o  
u  
r  
n  
a  
l  
s  
o  
r  
c  
o  
n  
f  
e  
r  
e  
n  
c  
e  
p  
r  
o  
c  
e  
e  
d  
i  
n  
g  
s

**D  
e  
v  
e  
l  
o  
p  
t  
h  
e  
s  
e  
a  
r  
c  
h**

Use a structure defined from a research work (PICOS, SPIDER, or PCC) to derive key words

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| C<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>u<br>l<br>t<br>a<br>l<br>i<br>b<br>r<br>a<br>r<br>i<br>a<br>n<br>o<br>r<br>d<br>o<br>m<br>a<br>i<br>n<br>e<br>x<br>p<br>e<br>r<br>t<br>d<br>u<br>r<br>i<br>n<br>g<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>d<br>e<br>s<br>i<br>g<br>n |  |
|---|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| It<br>er<br>at<br>iv<br>el<br>y<br>re<br>fi<br>n<br>e<br>th<br>e<br>se<br>ar<br>c<br>h<br>st<br>ri<br>n<br>g<br>to<br>i<br>m<br>pr<br>o<br>v<br>e<br>c<br>o<br>v<br>er<br>a<br>g<br>e |  |
|---|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| D<br>er<br>iv<br>e<br>a<br>d<br>di<br>ti<br>o<br>n<br>al<br>k<br>e<br>y<br>w<br>or<br>d<br>s<br>fr<br>o<br>m<br>k<br>n<br>o<br>w<br>n<br>re<br>le<br>v<br>a<br>nt<br>p<br>a<br>p<br>er<br>s |  |
|---|--|

Use these authorities, encyclopedias, or controlled vocabulary abbreviations (e.g., MESH, EBSCO) on subjects

**E  
v  
a  
l  
u  
a  
t  
e  
t  
h  
e  
s  
e  
a  
r  
c  
h**

T  
e  
s  
t  
t  
h  
e  
s  
e  
a  
r  
c  
h  
a  
g  
a  
i  
n  
s  
t  
a  
s  
e  
t  
o  
f  
k  
n  
o  
w  
n  
-  
r  
e  
l  
e  
v  
a  
n  
t  
p  
a  
p  
e  
r  
s

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| H<br>a<br>v<br>e<br>a<br>n<br>e<br>x<br>p<br>e<br>r<br>t<br>e<br>v<br>a<br>l<br>u<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>t<br>h<br>e<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>u<br>l<br>t<br>s |  |
|--|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| C<br>h<br>e<br>c<br>k<br>t<br>h<br>e<br>w<br>e<br>b<br>p<br>a<br>g<br>e<br>s<br>o<br>r<br>p<br>r<br>o<br>f<br>i<br>t<br>e<br>s<br>o<br>f<br>k<br>e<br>y<br>a<br>u<br>t<br>h<br>o<br>r<br>s<br>i<br>n<br>t<br>h<br>e<br>f<br>i<br>e<br>l<br>d |  |
|--|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| C<br>o<br>n<br>d<br>u<br>c<br>t<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>-<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>t<br>o<br>c<br>h<br>e<br>c<br>k<br>c<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>i<br>s<br>t<br>e<br>n<br>c<br>y |  |
|---|--|

**Inclusion and Exclusion**

Definition objective, precise specifications and exclusion

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| In<br>v<br>o<br>l<br>v<br>e<br>a<br>s<br>e<br>c<br>o<br>n<br>d<br>r<br>e<br>v<br>i<br>e<br>w<br>e<br>r<br>;<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>o<br>l<br>v<br>e<br>d<br>i<br>s<br>a<br>g<br>r<br>e<br>e<br>m<br>e<br>n<br>t<br>s<br>s<br>y<br>s<br>t<br>e<br>m<br>a<br>t<br>i<br>c<br>a<br>l<br>l<br>y |  |
|---|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| D<br>e<br>f<br>i<br>n<br>e<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>a<br>p<br>p<br>l<br>y<br>e<br>x<br>p<br>l<br>i<br>c<br>i<br>t<br>d<br>e<br>c<br>i<br>s<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>r<br>u<br>l<br>e<br>s<br>f<br>o<br>r<br>b<br>o<br>r<br>d<br>e<br>r<br>l<br>i<br>n<br>e<br>c<br>a<br>s<br>e |  |
|--|--|

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>D<br/>a<br/>t<br/>a<br/>e<br/>x<br/>t<br/>r<br/>a<br/>c<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b> | D<br>e<br>f<br>i<br>n<br>e<br>o<br>b<br>j<br>e<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>v<br>e<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>t<br>e<br>r<br>i<br>a<br>f<br>o<br>r<br>t<br>h<br>e<br>e<br>x<br>t<br>r<br>a<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>p<br>r<br>o<br>c<br>e<br>s<br>s |  |
|--|--|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Bl<br>in<br>d<br>or<br>o<br>b<br>sc<br>ur<br>e<br>in<br>fo<br>r<br>m<br>at<br>io<br>n<br>th<br>at<br>c<br>o<br>ul<br>d<br>bi<br>as<br>e<br>xt<br>ra<br>ct<br>io<br>n |  |
|--|--|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| In<br>v<br>o<br>l<br>v<br>e<br>a<br>s<br>e<br>c<br>o<br>n<br>d<br>r<br>e<br>v<br>i<br>e<br>w<br>er<br>;<br>re<br>so<br>lv<br>e<br>di<br>sa<br>gr<br>e<br>e<br>m<br>e<br>nt<br>s<br>in<br>e<br>xt<br>ra<br>ct<br>io<br>n |  |
|---|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| C<br>o<br>n<br>d<br>u<br>c<br>t<br>t<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>-<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>o<br>f<br>e<br>x<br>t<br>r<br>a<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>o<br>n<br>a<br>s<br>s<br>u<br>b<br>s<br>e<br>t |  |
|--|--|

|                       |   |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
| <b>Classification</b> | Classification studies by research archetypes (e.g., empirical, conceptual, review) |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Cl<br>as<br>si<br>fy<br>st<br>u<br>di<br>es<br>b<br>y<br>re<br>se<br>ar<br>c<br>h<br>m<br>et<br>h<br>o<br>d<br>(e<br>.g<br>,<br>c<br>as<br>e<br>st<br>u<br>d<br>y,<br>s<br>ur<br>v<br>e<br>y,<br>e<br>x<br>p<br>er<br>i<br>m<br>e<br>nt<br>) |  |
|--|--|

Classify studies by venue type (e.g., journal, conference, practitioner publication)

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>V<br/>a<br/>l<br/>i<br/>d<br/>i<br/>t<br/>y</b> | Di<br>sc<br>u<br>ss<br>v<br>a<br>l<br>i<br>d<br>i<br>t<br>y<br>th<br>re<br>at<br>s<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>li<br>m<br>i<br>t<br>at<br>io<br>n<br>s<br>of<br>th<br>e<br>re<br>vi<br>e<br>w<br>pr<br>o<br>c<br>es<br>s |  |
|--|--|--|

---

## Part 2: Scoring Rubrics

After completing the checklist, use the rubrics below to assign a score to each of the five key dimensions. Record these scores in your methods chapter alongside a brief narrative.

# Rubric 1: Motivating the Review

| S<br>c<br>o<br>r<br>e | L<br>a<br>b<br>e<br>l                                    | D<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>p<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| 0                     | N<br>o<br>t<br>d<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>b<br>e<br>d | T<br>h<br>e<br>r<br>e<br>v<br>i<br>e<br>w<br>i<br>s<br>n<br>o<br>t<br>m<br>o<br>t<br>i<br>v<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>d<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>n<br>o<br>o<br>b<br>j<br>e<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>v<br>e<br>s<br>a<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>d |

| <b>S<br/>c<br/>o<br/>r<br/>e</b> | <b>L<br/>a<br/>b<br/>e<br/>l</b> | <b>D<br/>e<br/>s<br/>c<br/>r<br/>i<br/>p<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b>   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 1                                | P<br>a<br>r<br>t<br>i<br>a<br>l  | M<br>o<br>t<br>i<br>v<br>a<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>q<br>u<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>a<br>r<br>e<br>p<br>r<br>o<br>v<br>i<br>d<br>e<br>d |

| Score | Label | Description  |
|-------|-------|--|
| 2     | Full  | Motivations and questions are provided and have been developed |

## Rubric 2: Search Strategy

| S<br>c<br>o<br>r<br>e | L<br>a<br>b<br>e<br>l                                    | D<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>p<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n   |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| 0                     | N<br>o<br>t<br>d<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>b<br>e<br>d | O<br>n<br>l<br>y<br>o<br>n<br>e<br>t<br>y<br>p<br>e<br>o<br>f<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>w<br>a<br>s<br>c<br>o<br>n<br>d<br>u<br>c<br>t<br>e<br>d |

| <b>S<br/>c<br/>o<br/>r<br/>e</b> | <b>L<br/>a<br/>b<br/>e<br/>l</b> | <b>D<br/>e<br/>s<br/>c<br/>r<br/>i<br/>p<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b>  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1                                | Mi<br>ni<br>m<br>al              | T<br>w<br>o<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h<br>s<br>t<br>r<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>g<br>i<br>e<br>s<br>w<br>e<br>r<br>e<br>u<br>s<br>e<br>d |

| <b>S<br/>c<br/>o<br/>r<br/>e</b> | <b>L<br/>a<br/>b<br/>e<br/>l</b> | <b>D<br/>e<br/>s<br/>c<br/>r<br/>i<br/>p<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b>   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 2                                | F<br>u<br>l<br>l                 | A<br>l<br>l<br>t<br>h<br>r<br>e<br>e<br>s<br>t<br>r<br>a<br>t<br>e<br>g<br>i<br>e<br>s<br>w<br>e<br>r<br>e<br>u<br>s<br>e<br>d:<br>d<br>a<br>t<br>a<br>b<br>a<br>s<br>e<br>s<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>c<br>h,<br>s<br>n<br>o<br>w<br>b<br>a<br>l<br>l<br>s<br>a<br>m<br>p<br>l<br>i<br>n<br>g,<br>a<br>n<br>d |

# Rubric 3: Evaluating the Search

| S<br>c<br>o<br>r<br>e | L<br>a<br>b<br>e<br>l | D<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>p<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|

0

Not  
described

No  
actions  
were  
taken  
to  
improve  
the  
reliability  
of  
the  
search  
or  
inclusion/  
exclusion  
pro

|   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | Minimal | At least one interaction was taken into improvement <i>either</i> the reliability of the search <i>or</i> the inclusion |
|---|---------|---|

2

Par  
tial

At  
le  
as  
t  
o  
n  
e  
a  
c  
t  
io  
n  
w  
as  
ta  
k  
e  
n  
to  
i  
m  
pr  
o  
v  
e  
*b*  
*o*  
*t*  
*h*  
th  
e  
se  
ar  
c  
h  
a  
n  
d  
th  
e  
in  
cl  
u  
si  
o  
n/  
e  
xc  
lu  
si  
o  
n

|   |              |   |
|---|--------------|---|
| 3 | F<br>ul<br>l | Al<br>l<br>id<br>e<br>nt<br>ifi<br>e<br>d<br>a<br>ct<br>io<br>n<br>s<br>w<br>er<br>e<br>ta<br>k<br>e<br>n |
|---|--------------|---|

## Rubric 4: Extraction and Classification

| <b>S<br/>c<br/>o<br/>r<br/>e</b> | <b>L<br/>a<br/>b<br/>e<br/>l</b> | <b>D<br/>e<br/>s<br/>c<br/>r<br/>i<br/>p<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|

0

Not  
described

No  
actions  
were  
taken  
to  
improve  
the  
extractions  
reliability  
or  
enable  
comparability  
between

|   |         |   |
|---|---------|---|
| 1 | Minimal | At least one reaction was taken into consideration in reliability |
|---|---------|---|

2

Par  
tial

At  
least  
one  
action  
to  
increase  
the  
ext  
raction  
ion  
re  
li  
abi  
lity  
**and**  
st  
u  
di  
es  
w  
ere  
cl  
as  
si  
fi  
ed  
by  
re  
se  
ar

|   |             |  |
|---|-------------|--|
| 3 | F<br>u<br>l | A<br>l<br>i<br>d<br>e<br>n<br>t<br>i<br>f<br>i<br>e<br>d<br>a<br>c<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>w<br>e<br>r<br>e<br>t<br>a<br>k<br>e<br>n |
|---|-------------|--|

## Rubric 5: Study Validity

| <b>S<br/>c<br/>o<br/>r<br/>e</b> | <b>L<br/>a<br/>b<br/>e<br/>l</b> | <b>D<br/>e<br/>s<br/>c<br/>r<br/>i<br/>p<br/>t<br/>i<br/>o<br/>n</b> |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 0 | N<br>o<br>t<br>d<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>b<br>e<br>d | N<br>o<br>t<br>h<br>e<br>r<br>e<br>a<br>r<br>e<br>s<br>o<br>r<br>l<br>i<br>m<br>i<br>t<br>a<br>t<br>i<br>o<br>n<br>s<br>a<br>r<br>e<br>d<br>e<br>s<br>c<br>r<br>i<br>b<br>e<br>d |
|---|--|--|

|   |              |   |
|---|--------------|---|
| 1 | F<br>ul<br>l | T<br>hr<br>e<br>at<br>s<br>a<br>n<br>d<br>li<br>m<br>it<br>at<br>io<br>n<br>s<br>of<br>th<br>e<br>re<br>vi<br>e<br>w<br>pr<br>o<br>c<br>es<br>s<br>ar<br>e<br>d<br>es<br>cr<br>ib<br>e<br>d |
|---|--------------|---|

---

## Interpreting Your Scores

No minimum threshold is formally established in the literature for general SLRs; the rubric is a diagnostic tool, not a pass/fail gate. Use the results as follows:

- **In your methods chapter:** Report your scores and briefly explain any dimension rated 0 or 1. A low score on a dimension is not automatically a fatal flaw, but it must be acknowledged as a limitation.
- **In your discussion:** Dimensions scored 0 (especially search strategy and validity) should be discussed explicitly when qualifying the strength of your conclusions.
- **As a planning aid:** If you are still in the protocol stage, any action not yet checked is a concrete item to build into your plan before searching begins.

For more detail on designing and evaluating your search strategy, see the [Search Quality Self-Assessment Checklist](#) (adapted from vom Brocke et al., 2015), which provides granular guidance on the search phase specifically.

---

Revision #2

Created 25 February 2026 07:59:06 by Librarian

Updated 25 February 2026 08:14:16 by Librarian