

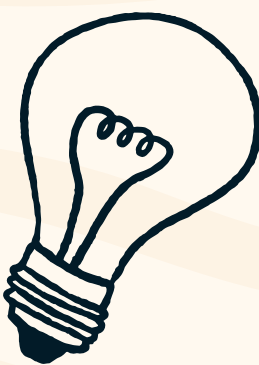
# METHODOLOGY

## A GUIDE ON THE METHODOLOGY USED IN MY PROJECT



### 1 RESEARCH DESIGN

This project will use a structured literature review from secondary research in order to attempt to examine barriers to accessing health and social care services for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the UK. Secondary research is ideal for this project because it allows to compare existing data and minimises the risks that would come with studying volunteers in primary research (Gallofre and Onyeneho, 2023).



### 2 SEARCH STRATEGY

Literature which will be useful for my project will be identified through the use of platform like PsycINFO, PubMed and Google Scholar, in addition to any other platforms that have published journals. To achieve the best possible results, keywords that will be used include: "autism", "autistic children", "healthcare access", "social care", "barriers", "service provision" and "family experiences".

Literature such as government and privately-funded reports will also be used, but only when the the research is carried out by a respectable entity; in these cases, the 15-year rule will also apply.

**NOTE:** Searches will put focus on UK-relevant evidence, and research that addresses access to health and social care services.

### 3 IMPORTANT CRITERIA

Studies which will be **included** in the report will need to be at most 15 years old, have Autism as a central theme (Autistic children or their families), report on or mention barriers, facilitators or experiences that relate to health and social care services and access to them, and/or provide data that is based on research carries out in the UK. **Alternatively**, studies which don't address my research question, don't have a relevant population (such as looking at adults with Autism) or fall outside the specified age range will **not be used**.

### 4 QUALITY APPRAISAL

The studies which will be selected in the first part of the dissertation will undergo quality appraisal using an appropriate tool: in this case, the tool that was chosen was CEBM and Oxford University's **CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF QUALITATIVE STUDIES** Worksheet, which is available on their website.

This tool explores factors such as appropriateness of samples used in the study, data collection methods, reseracher's position, justification and transferability of results (CEBM, 2026).

### 5 DATA ANALYSIS

To extract the data from the secondary studies, a structured table will be used and this will help findings be synthesised on the basis of theme/key words, allowing the recurring patterns and differences across studies to become more easily manageable. Some themes that will be considered beforehand include: **diagnostic waiting times, geographical inequalities, workforce pressures, communication barriers, stigma and difficulties navigating services and gaps in representation.**

However, it is not ruled out that further themes/patterns might arise as the sources are being reviewed, so this list is not final.

### 6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since the research will be using secondary resources which have already been published, and will not venture out to conduct any primary research, the ethical considerations which need to be taken into account are fewer, but completely irrelevant. For example, ethical practice will be maintained as appropriate for this level of work and the use of accurate referencing, fair representation of findings, respect for autistic individuals and the use of non-stigmatising language will be continuously applied.



# REFERENCES

**CEBM. (2026). CRITICAL APPRAISAL TOOLS: CENTRE FOR EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE (CEBM), UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. WWW.CEBM.OX.AC.UK. HTTPS://WWW.CEBM.OX.AC.UK/RESOURCES/EBM-TOOLS/CRITICAL-APPRAISAL-TOOLS**

**GALLOFRE, M. F., & ONYENEHO, K. (2023, JUNE 28). UNDERSTANDING THE VALUE OF SECONDARY RESEARCH DATA. NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING. HTTPS://WWW.NIA.NIH.GOV/RESEARCH/BLOG/2023/06/UNDERSTANDING-VALUE-SECONDARY-RESEARCH-DATA**