

Course T5 — Language of evidence

Half-day course

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Course topics

Scientific rigour can easily be lost if the language used to describe and summarise results is open to misinterpretation. In particular, summary statements describing evidence of benefit, evidence of harm, inconclusive evidence, insufficient evidence and evidence of no significant effect are often confusing, even for experienced readers of scientific texts. This can be further compounded by the use of biased expressions, such as 'no evidence to support a beneficial effect' when there has been no studies of the effect in question.

In this course we:

- highlight the language used in scientific texts to describe the evidence supporting the conclusions drawn and recommendations made.
- provide an approach to communicating evidence clearly, consistently and free from accidental bias
- demonstrate the application of this approach.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, participants should be able to:

- identify common problems in writing about scientific evidence
- use strategies to eliminate misleading statements and bias.

Learning method

This interactive course includes lectures, group discussions, exercises and comprehensive course notes.

Who should attend?

This course is aimed at anyone who writes about scientific evidence, whether it be for a scientific audience or the public.