This document describes the rules for the rating and analysis of the scores used for developing practice guideline according to the “Formal consensus” method.

These rules are defined \textit{a priori} and communicated to the rating group before the first round of rating. They are suitable for a group of at least 9 experts and can be adjusted if this group comprises more than 15 experts.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Meaning of the discontinuous numerical scale running from 1 to 9} & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 & 9 \\
\hline
Totally inappropriate & \textless & \textless & \textless & Undecided & \textless & \textless & \textless & \textless & \textless \\
\hline
Totally appropriate & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater & \textgreater \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

For each proposal, the assessor must give a response by ticking in one of the boxes between 1 and 9. Responses placed between 2 numbers or across 2 numbers are not accepted.
First round of rating

- The appropriateness or inappropriateness of the proposal is defined by the value of the median and the distribution of all the scores obtained on the scale of 1 to 9.
- Agreement among the experts can be defined on the basis of the distribution of all the scores obtained: there is agreement when the scores included are all $\leq 5$ or all $\geq 5$.
- A proposal is deemed
  - **appropriate**, when the value of the median is $\geq 7$ and the scores are all $\geq 5$
  - **inappropriate**, when the value of the median is $\leq 3.5$ and the scores are all $\leq 5$
  - of **uncertain** appropriateness, when the value of the median is between 4 and 6.5 (undecided) or when there is no consensus among the members of the rating group (all other situations)
- If a value is missing (no response given for one of the proposals even though the assessor has filled in and returned this questionnaire), the proposal is deemed uncertain.
- Proposals for which there was a strong agreement are accepted as they are. They aren’t discussed in a meeting, neither submitted for the second round of rating.

Second round of rating

- The analysis is made on the basis of the available questionnaires from the members who took part in the meeting: if a member of the rating group fails to return the questionnaire, that member is excluded from the group, and the failure to respond is not counted as a missing value for each proposal.
- If missing values remain despite efforts to avoid them, the analysis is considered valid if at least 9 scores are obtained for a proposal (when the group initially comprises more than 10 persons, at least 80% of the responses must be obtained).
- If there are no missing values, one of the scores can be excluded from the analysis of the degree of agreement according to the following rules
  - the minimum value is excluded if the median is strictly greater than 5
  - the maximum value is excluded if the median is less than or equal to 5.
- The analysis leads to distinguish the proposals that are deemed appropriate and those that are deemed inappropriate or those on which the rating group remains undecided.

**Classification of the proposal according to the value of the median and the distribution of the scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>Agreement among experts</th>
<th>Median Distribution of scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong agreement</td>
<td>[7-9]</td>
<td>$\geq 7$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative agreement</td>
<td>[5-9]</td>
<td>$\geq 7$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inappropriate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong agreement</td>
<td>[1-3]</td>
<td>$\leq 3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative agreement</td>
<td>[1-5]</td>
<td>$\leq 3.5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncertain</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undecided</td>
<td>[1-9]</td>
<td>[4-6.5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No consensus</td>
<td>Other situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>