Construct Validity Checklist

This checklist follows the recommendations made in the paper:

> ***Measuring what Matters:***
> ***Construct Validity in Large Language Model Benchmarks***
> NeurIPS 2025 Datasets & Benchmarks
> `https://openreview.net/pdf?id=mdA5lVvNcU`

Define the phenomenon

- □ Provide a precise and operational definition for the phenomenon being measured
- □ Specify the scope of the phenomenon being covered and acknowledge any excluded aspects
- □ Identify if the phenomenon has sub-components and ensure they are measured separately

Measure only the phenomenon

- □ Control for unrelated tasks that may affect the results
- □ Assess the impact of format constraints on model performance
- □ Validate any automated output parsing techniques for accuracy, consistency and bias

Construct a representative dataset for the task

- □ Employ sampling strategies to ensure task items are representative of the overall task space
- □ Verify the quality and relevance of all task items, especially for large or automatically generated datasets
- □ Include task items that test known LLM sensitivities (e.g. input permutations or variations)

Acknowledge limitations of reusing datasets

- □ Document whether the benchmark adapts a previous dataset or benchmark
- □ If so, analyse and report the relevant strengths and limitations of the adapted prior work
- □ If so, report and compare performance on the new benchmark against the original
- □ Explain modifications to reused datasets and how they improve construct validity

Prepare for contamination

- □ Implement tests to detect data contamination and apply them to the benchmark
- □ Maintain a held-out set of task items to facilitate ongoing, uncontaminated evaluation
- □ Investigate the potential pre-exposure of benchmark source materials or similar data in common LLM training corpora

Use statistical methods to compare models

- □ Report the benchmark's sample size and justify its statistical power
- □ Report uncertainty estimates for all primary scores to enable robust model comparisons
- □ If using human raters, describe their demographics and mitigate potential demographic biases in rater recruitment and instructions
- □ Use metrics that capture the inherent variability of any subjective labels, without relying on single-point aggregation or exact matching.

Conduct an error analysis

- □ Conduct a qualitative and quantitative analysis of common failure modes
- □ Investigate whether failure modes correlate with non-targeted phenomena (confounders) rather than the intended construct
- □ If so, identify and discuss any potential scoring biases revealed in the error analysis
- □ Conduct experiments or propose new directions to improve model scores on the benchmark

Justify construct validity

- □ Justify the relevance of the benchmark for the phenomenon with real-world applications
- □ Provide a clear rationale for the choice of tasks and metrics, connected to the operational definition of the phenomenon
- □ Compare similarities and differences between the benchmark and existing evaluations of similar phenomena
- □ Discuss the limitations and design trade-offs of the benchmark concerning construct validity