

Determining Evidence-Base

A Cheat Sheet

Evidence Level	Study Design	Sample Size	Effects	Miscellaneous
Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 experimental study, meaning a randomized control trial (RCT). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large sample size (= or > 350) AND a multi-site sample (study was conducted at more than 1 site) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistically significant and positive effects or outcomes Other qualifying studies should not show negative effects for the same outcomes. 	Studies technically should meet WhatWorksClearinghouse's standards without reservations, but we have included programs that are not reviewed by WWC
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 quasi-experimental design (QED) study, aka not an RCT i.e. longitudinal studies, studies based on comparison groups, or non-randomized samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large sample size (= or > 350) AND a multi-site sample (study was conducted at more than 1 site) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistically significant and positive effects or outcomes Other qualifying studies should not show negative effects for the same outcomes. 	
Promising (High) <i>* based on the DOE study design requirements for Strong evidence, except for sample size</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 RCT, 1 QED, Or multiple RCTs or QED 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not necessarily meet n=350 Does not necessarily have a multi-site sample 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistically significant and positive effects or outcomes Other qualifying studies should not show negative effects for the same outcomes. 	i.e. an intervention that has multiple RCTs. Each RCT does not meet the sample size criteria but has statistically significant results.
Promising (Low) <i>* directly based on the DOE requirements for Promising evidence</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A well-designed correlational study i.e. no RCTs or QEDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not necessarily meet n=350 Does not necessarily have a multi-site sample 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistically significant and positive effects or outcomes Other qualifying studies should not show negative effects for the same outcomes. 	
Demonstrates a rationale/ Research-building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A logic model or evaluation No experimental study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not necessarily meet n=350 Does not necessarily have a multi-site sample 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation suggests that the intervention is likely to improve a student outcome or other relevant outcome 	