

CLEAR Outcome Quality Checklist

A quality rubric for assessing whether an outcome record is clear enough, valuable enough, evaluable enough, actionable enough, and responsible enough to use.

Created by Anshul Lalit and Ania Mendoz | Free to use | CC BY-SA 4.0

Score the outcome record - never the person or team. Use evidence and discussion, not a mechanical total.

GENERAL SCORING SCALE

0 / Absent	Essential information is missing, unsafe, or the statement is not an outcome.
1 / Weak	Relevant information exists but is ambiguous, unsupported, incomplete, or impractical.
2 / Usable	Sufficiently clear and credible for a bounded, responsible trial.
3 / Strong	Explicit, evidence-informed, stakeholder-tested, and decision-ready.

NON-NEGOTIABLE RULE

Do not rely on a total score. Any critical failure, any dimension scored 0, or any missing mandatory domain review requires revision before use.

WORKING RELEASE

Version 0.1 - for reliability testing. Use independent reviewers where practical. Record disagreement and ambiguous wording so the rubric can improve. Apply required professional, legal, safety, security, and operational standards.

C / CLEAR AND CONCISE		
0	ABSENT	The record is an activity, deliverable, project, or aspiration; the affected actor or intended direction cannot be identified.
1	WEAK	A change is implied but scope, present condition, boundary, or horizon is materially ambiguous; solution language obscures the change.
2	USABLE	Actor or system, intended change, scope, and horizon are sufficient for a bounded trial; interventions remain separable.
3	STRONG	Stakeholders interpret the change consistently; boundary, present condition, exclusions, horizon, and terminology have been tested.
!	CRITICAL FAILURE	The record is not an outcome, or it conceals a mandatory implementation decision as the intended change.

L / LINKED TO OBJECTIVES		
0	ABSENT	No legitimate need or valued result is identified; the only rationale is plan completion or instruction.
1	WEAK	A general benefit is asserted but beneficiaries, affected groups, trade-offs, or causal assumptions are unclear.
2	USABLE	Need, intended value, beneficiaries, affected groups, trade-offs, and the plausible relationship to wider purpose are visible.
3	STRONG	Value is supported by relevant evidence and stakeholder insight; burdens, distribution, conflicts, and causal uncertainty are examined.
!	CRITICAL FAILURE	Foreseeable material harm is hidden by a claimed benefit, or the only purpose is improving the indicator itself.

E / EVALUATIVE AND MEASURABLE		
0	ABSENT	No credible assessment is possible; the measure represents only activity or output, or a target lacks meaning, definition, or source.
1	WEAK	Evidence is weakly related; baseline, method, timing, or definition is missing; one gameable measure dominates and limitations are ignored.
2	USABLE	Baseline, evidence, sources, frequency, and decision criteria are defined; counter-evidence or qualitative checks address key blind spots.
3	STRONG	Evidence is proportionately tested for reliability, validity, comparability, distribution, uncertainty, decision usefulness, and reproducibility.
!	CRITICAL FAILURE	The plan can report success while the intended condition clearly worsens, and no review mechanism can detect the distortion.

A / ACHIEVABLE AND REALISTIC		
0	ABSENT	No accountable owner exists; the owner has no plausible influence; no feasible intervention or escalation path exists.
1	WEAK	Ownership is nominal; control, influence, dependencies, and assumptions are conflated; feasibility is merely asserted.
2	USABLE	Owner and contributors are identified; influence, dependencies, assumptions, alternatives, constraints, and escalation routes are visible.
3	STRONG	Decision rights are accepted; dependencies have owners or escalation; assumptions are prioritised; alternatives and credible targets are tested.
!	CRITICAL FAILURE	An actor is held accountable for a condition they cannot meaningfully influence, without shared ownership or escalation.

R / REVISITED AND REVIEWED		
0	ABSENT	Material safety, legal, ethical, security, environmental, quality, or equity constraints are absent; no revision mechanism exists.
1	WEAK	Risks or guardrails lack evidence, ownership, or escalation; review is only a status update; gaming and unintended effects are ignored.
2	USABLE	Material guardrails, harms, evidence, owners, review authority, cadence, revision triggers, and stopping logic support a bounded trial.
3	STRONG	Guardrails are tested with specialists and affected stakeholders; leading and lagging evidence, decision rights, and retirement logic are explicit.
!	CRITICAL FAILURE	The outcome permits target achievement through violation of a non-negotiable obligation or foreseeable unacceptable harm.

DECISION RULES

Reject as not an outcome	Use when C scores 0 because the statement is work, an output, or an aspiration - or when no legitimate value exists.
Revise before use	Use for any score of 0, any critical failure, unusable evidence, or an incomplete required domain review.
Bounded trial	Every dimension is at least 2; no critical failure; uncertainty, guardrails, boundary, and review timing are explicit.
Operational use	Every dimension is at least 2; high-risk dimensions are 3; required domain and stakeholder reviews are complete.

ASSESSMENT RECORD

Dimension	Score	Evidence used	Required revision
C - Clear and Concise			
L - Linked to Objectives			
E - Evaluative and Measurable			
A - Achievable and Realistic			
R - Revisited and Reviewed			

Decision and rationale	
Reviewer(s) and date	
Next review or trigger	

The core CLEAR quality test is necessary but may not be sufficient.

OT and safety-critical	Add mandatory safety, asset-integrity, operational-limits, permit, and management-of-change review.
Cybersecurity	Make asset, threat, exposure, control, residual risk, and evidence definitions traceable.
Product and service	Test user need, accessibility, behavioural evidence, distribution, and unintended displacement.
Public and social	Address equity, reach, participation, context, contribution limits, and burden on affected groups.
Organisational capability	Separate learning outputs from applied behaviour, enabled performance, and realised value.

RELIABILITY-TESTING NOTES

During pilot use, record the score by dimension, evidence used, ambiguous language, reviewer disagreement, whether discussion changed the score, and time required. Revise the rubric from observed disagreement - not merely from preference.

OBSERVATIONS

Use CLEAR to design the quality of an outcome. Continue to use the professional methods, controls, and standards required by the domain.