

## Flags and Codes

There is a conceptual difference between -:

- 1) Including or Excluding an item and giving it an Include or Exclude Screening **Code**
- 2) Giving an item an Include or Exclude **FLAG**

It can be confusing! In the world of Systematic Reviews, there is some debate about how the Include **flag** should be used or defined. It is seen as a different way of marking which items are included in the review, rather than part of the screening process. You have specific criteria for whether your references are included or excluded during the Screening process, reflected in the *codes* you assign each item. You will have additional criteria and *codes* in the next stage – Screening on Full Text.

However, the Include **flag** is considered in a different manner. It is not a specific code or related to a specific stage in the review process. It applies to the whole review. There could be a number of reasons for **flagging** the item with the Include or Exclude **flag** – it represents the items under consideration in your whole review; it tends to be used in a different manner to specific include and exclude *codes*.

Taken from the ER4 [manual](#) (from page 28) -:

“I, E and D flags Items in EPPI-Reviewer can be labelled as Included (I), Excluded (E) or Deleted (D). When a review is loaded all of the items with the (I) flag are displayed in the Documents tab. Included (I) or Excluded (E) items do not necessarily refer to the screening criteria applied to an item. Whether an item is included or excluded from your review could depend on a number of different judgements spread across EPPI-Reviewer 4: Software for research synthesis Managing your documents 29 many different codesets. The I or E flags are a method of indicating an items status and aid in information management. For example, a user may have many thousands of items that require screening. The process of screening might narrow the items for further coding to hundreds and further coding might reduce the number of items to dozens. The user can dynamically change what items are considered included or excluded to help identify the items they are presently working with. The items considered included or excluded might change often based on the reviewer’s requirements at that time. By default, documents brought into a review are marked as (I) unless the user decides otherwise. All includes items can be displayed by clicking on the List included documents icon. The List included documents icon can be found at the top of the Documents tab of the Home panel. The documents marked as Excluded or Deleted can be listed by clicking on the corresponding icons. The List excluded documents icon can be found at the top of the Documents tab of the Home panel The List deleted documents icon can be found at the top of the Documents tab of the Home panel. You can mark an item with an Include or Exclude flag based on previously assigned codes or by selecting individual items.”