

Supplementary Table 1. Example of the structure of a domain and of an assessment element

Domain	Topics	Issues
Domain (Clinical effectiveness)	1: Mortality	1: Overall mortality
		2: Disease-specific mortality
	2: Morbidity	3: Symptoms
		4: Progression of disease
		5: Hospitalisation
	3: Function	6: Global improvement of function
		7: Quality of life
		8: Return to work

An assessment element		
Effectiveness	Mortality	Overall mortality

Supplementary Table 2. Contents of an element card. (Abridged version; for full version see original HTA Core Model documents.)

Information	Explanation	Format
Element ID:	An individual code for each element.	
Domain:	The domain within which the element belongs to.	Standard list
Topic:	The topic within which the element belongs to.	Standard list
Issue:	The specific question within the aspect and topic. Should be in the form of a question.	Standard list
Clarification:	A brief clarification that explains what the issue is about. Clarification is not necessarily needed if the issue is self-explanatory.	Free text
Importance:	Defines how important it is to consider the particular issue when conducting HTA. This importance has to do with significance from the viewpoint of HTA. This is not always the same as "relevance" in a particular policy context.	3 categories: <i>Critical</i> <i>Important</i> <i>Optional</i> Further requirements may be indicated, such as " <i>Critical if the technology is a device.</i> "
Information sources(s):	An explanation of how to find answers to this particular issue. What methodology to use? If there are several possible methodologies, which are preferred? Where to find relevant information?	Free text
Transferability:	An estimate about the transferability of data or other findings from one context to another.	3 Categories: <i>Complete</i> <i>Partially</i> <i>Not</i>
Reference:	Indicates the reference of the issue.	Free text
Relations:	List of other elements that are related to this element.	Primarily a list of Element IDs Free (explanatory) text allowed as well.
Status:	Indicates whether the element belongs to the HTA core or a wider HTA framework.	3 categories: <i>Core</i> <i>Borderline</i> <i>Not core</i>

Supplementary Table 3. Examples of how issues defined in the core model are translated into research questions.

CORE MODEL	CORE HTA
Issue	Research question (in different settings)
Does the technology reduce the severity of symptoms of disease?	Do drug-eluting stents reduce chest pain in patients with angina pectoris?
Can informed consent be received?	Are stroke patients able to provide informed consent for anticoagulation treatment?
Does the technology challenge cultural values?	Is screening for fetal malformations accepted by all subgroups in the population?

Supplementary Figure 1. Two alternative ways of defining the core, using onion as a metaphor.

Left figure: Safety, effectiveness and cost are regarded as the most important domains for an HTA and thereby form the core. Organisational, societal or legal domains are regarded as less important and therefore optional for an HTA.

Right figure: All domains contribute to some extent to an HTA. Priorities are made within each domain.

