

## **Reflecting on the Role and Conduct of Rapid Review Methodology for Educational Research**

Connie Cirkony<sup>1</sup>

Mark Rickinson<sup>1</sup>, Lucas Walsh<sup>1</sup>, Jo Gleeson<sup>1</sup>, Mandy Salisbury<sup>1</sup> and Blake Cutler<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Monash University

The education sector has been described as one with low levels of investment in research, and weak links between policy, research, and innovation. Yet, there are growing expectations internationally that schools and school systems will use research evidence to underpin and inform their improvement efforts. Against this backdrop, there is increasing interest in the role of research synthesis for enhancing the influence of research on education policy and practice.

One approach to research synthesis is ‘rapid review’, which involves a review of previous systematic reviews. Rapid reviews are used to identify high quality evidence to inform decisions and initiatives, are completed over shorter timeframes, and have been found to identify conclusions similar to those in full systematic reviews. They are commonly used in the health sector but are more limited in the education sector.

This paper reflects on the experiences of conducting a rapid review in education on effective professional learning for school-based educators. The process involved using and adapting rapid review guidelines from a global health organisation. Our purpose here is not to share the review's findings but rather to reflect on methodological decisions made during the review process in light of considerations for the education context. We argue that, as a tool to inform decisions and initiatives in education, rapid reviews show promise for accessing and synthesising high-quality research within short time frames to provide systematic and transparent evidence-based guidance.