

# Test, Learn, Adapt: Developing Public Policy with Randomised Controlled Trials

## Description

[Tweet](#)

Laura Haynes, Owain Service, Ben Goldacre, David Torgerson. Cabinet Office. Behavioral Insights Team. 2012. [Available as pdf](#)

Contents

Executive Summary

Introduction

Part 1 – What is an RCT and why are they important?

What is a randomised controlled trial?

The case for RCTs-debunking some myths:

1. We don't necessarily know what works

2. RCTs don't have to cost a lot of money

3 There are ethical advantages to using RCTs

4. RCTs do not have to be complicated or difficult to run

PART II-Conducting an RCT: 9 key steps

Test

Step 1: Identify two or more policy interventions to compare

Step 2: Define the outcome that the policy is intended to influence

Step 3: Decide on the randomisation unit

Step 4: Determine how many units are required for robust results

Step 5: Assign each unit to one of the policy interventions using a robustly random method

Step 6: Introduce the policy interventions to the assigned groups

Learn

Step 7: Measure the results and determine the impact of the policy interventions

Adapt

Step 8: Adapt your policy intervention to reflect your findings

Step 9: Return to step 1

## Category

1. Uncategorized

## Tags

1. RCT

## Date

23/01/2026

## Date Created

20/06/2012

## Author

admin