

Evaluating information Checklist



When you are writing your assignments you will need to use a variety of good quality academic sources; but with so much information available, how do you decide what you should use and what is not appropriate? The following questions will help you to evaluate the information you find.

Authority

Can you tell who the author is?	
Can you tell if the author is appropriately qualified to provide the information?	
Does the author work for a particular organisation?	
Is there any information about sponsorship or how the work was funded?	
Has the information been peer reviewed or gone through an editing process?	

Objectivity

What is the purpose of the information? (to inform/sell/persuade)	
Is the author's perspective clearly stated?	
Can you detect any bias?	
Who is the target audience?	
Is there any advertising/marketing on the page?	

Timeliness

Can you tell when the work was created or last updated? Does it matter for your piece of work?	
If it is a website, does it look like it is being maintained?	
If it is a website, do the links work?	

Supporting Evidence

Does the author provide evidence to support his/her ideas or views?	
Are these accurate references to other sources that you can follow up?	
If it is online, are there links to other sources?	
Is there any data or statistics provided?	

Relevance

Is the information too basic or too advanced?	
Is the emphasis on the topic appropriate to your needs?	
Does the information relate to specific topic and criteria you are interested in?	

What is your judgment? Taking your evaluation into consideration, would you feel confident using this information as part of or in support of your research? Why/why not?