
Evaluation checklist

Here is a list of criteria for filtering information and deciding whether it is worth using for your studies. Not all of these will be relevant for all information sources - it will depend on the context in which it is being used.

Can you find the following evidence in your source of information?

Authority

Can you tell who has written the piece?
Is the author credible?
Is the text from a trusted, respected source?
Has it been peer reviewed?

Currency

When was it written and when published?
Has the climate of opinion changed?
What's the issue/edition/publication/last updated date?
If it is a website does it look like it is being maintained?

Relevance

How closely related is the text to your subject?
Is the information too basic or too advanced?

Completeness

Are there references to other sources for further study?
Does the author use evidence to back up his argument?

Accuracy

What is your impression of the grammar, punctuation and spelling?
Can the information be verified against another source?
Are the links and references accurate?

Bias

What is the bias of the source?
Why was the information created (inform, sell, persuade)?
Has the author been sponsored to produce the information?
Is the source trustworthy?

Language style/tone

Is the writing chatty, informal, reasoned, exaggerated?
Who is the target audience - is it suitable for your research?

What do you think? Would you be happy to use this in your assignment to support your research?