



Evaluating research resources

This course provides some easy to remember strategic methods for quickly evaluating information resources. Learn and use either the C.R.A.P or R.E.V.I.E.W method for evaluation.

☰ [Using the C.R.A.P method](#)

☰ [Using the R.E.V.I.E.W method](#)

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Using the C.R.A.P method

What is good information?

This site offers some guidance on how to evaluate the quality of the information found for your assignments.

Below is an evaluation method (C.R.A.P.) to help identify quality information.

C for Currency

Ask yourself these questions:

- How old is the source?
- When was it written?
- Is it out of date for the topic under discussion?

Depending on the topic you are researching, currency could be relevant back many thousands of years for ancient artworks or texts, or it may be that currency is only relevant for the past 12 months to 3 years in the case of medical, scientific or technological information.



R for Reliability

- What methods or approach were used in their research?
- Do they refer to evidence, and is it sound?
- What references are included?

A good source of information will provide clear and logical evidence as well as a comprehensive reference list. You can use these lists to identify

resources that can help further your own research.



A for Authority

- Who produced this source?
- Are they an expert?
- What credentials do they have?
- Are they reputable enough to trust?

Anyone can publish a book (e.g. self publishing/vanity publishing), create a webpage or a false identity online. Can you trust the author has any knowledge in the subject area? If you are not sure of the author, you can check (using Google) to see if they have an online profile, are affiliated

with a reputable organisation or university, and the areas of their teaching, research or publication list.



P for Point of view or Purpose

- Is the author objective or biased?
- Are they providing opinions or facts?
- What are they selling?
- Do they have vested interests or hidden agendas?

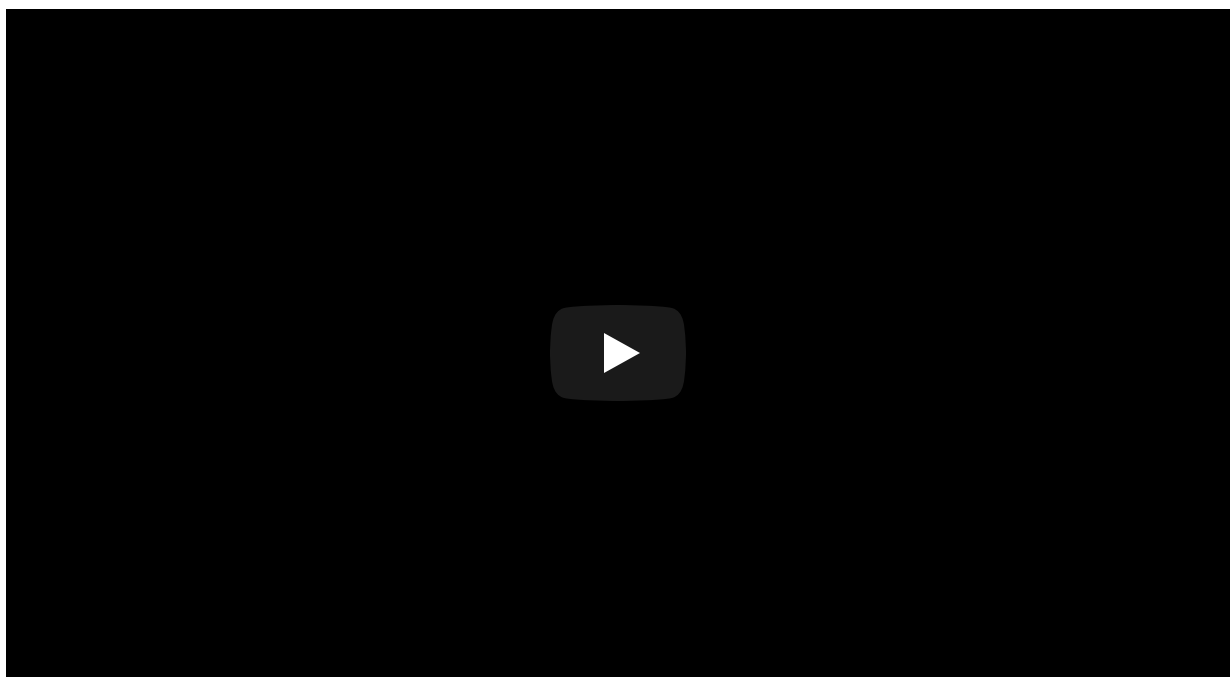
Everyone is biased in some way. Although academic (scholarly) research aims to be as objective as possible, there is always an element of bias and

subjectivity in the research, methods or writing. Your responsibility as a researcher is to identify bias (intentional or unintentional).

In the area of research, funding and grants, may influence the research results and recommendations. Good research will be transparent and acknowledge any influences that may derive from funding.

The CRAP test (video)

This video is part of a series, and details how to use "The CRAP Test" to evaluate information. This video is shared under the CC BY-SA 4.0 license.



Evaluating information: the C.R.A.P. test by [UTS Library](#) | [Creative Commons Attribution license \(reuse allowed\)](#)

Using the R.E.V.I.E.W method

What is good information?

This tutorial offers some guidance on how to evaluate the quality of the information found for your assignments.

Below is an evaluation method (R.E.V.I.E.W) to help identify quality information.

R for Relevance

Ask yourself these questions:

- How relevant is the resource to your topic or question?
- Does the resource provide a broad overview, or does it relate to just one aspect of your topic/question?

- Have you read a variety of sources to determine whether this one is useful?

E for Expertise of the author —

- What is the educational background of the author?
- Is this topic in the author's area of expertise?
- Are they regularly cited by the other authors in the field?

V for Viewpoint of author/organisation —

- Is the author or organisation associated with a particular view or position?
- What is the purpose of the resource? (Is it intended to inform? To persuade? To entertain?)

I for Intended audience —

- Who is the intended audience for the resource?

- Is the resource at the appropriate level for your needs – is it too basic or too technical?

E is for Evidence

—

- Has the author cited appropriate evidence to back up their theories/conclusions?
- Is there a bibliography or reference section? (This may contain further useful resources) Has the resource been through the peer review process?

W is for when it was published

—

- When was the resource published?
- Is the information still current, or have there been further developments in the topic area?

Further help

Still not sure how to tell the difference between good and bad information?

The Library can help.



Further help

[Library - University of Southern Queensland \(usq.edu.au\)](https://usq.edu.au/library)

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