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ECSO4003: Academic Study Skills

Credible References 2023

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



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What is Credible Referencing?

- You are expected to use credible sources in all assessments and submissions.
- A credible source is one that is:
 - written by someone who is an expert in their discipline
 - and is free of errors and bias.

Resources

- We have already explored what you can use as a resource, i.e.:
 - Books
 - Journal Articles
 - Websites
 - Legislation
- But how do we know if they are appropriate in Higher Education?

The answer is...

- We need to check if they are credible!
- There are FIVE criteria to consider when evaluating information:
 - Authority
 - Currency
 - Content
 - Accuracy
 - Bias

Authority

- Who is the author? Are they an expert in their field and the topic?
- Have they been cited by other authors?
- Have they written other articles/books in this field?
- Who is the publisher?

Currency

- When was the article/book published?
- Is the publication date right for your need?
- Do you need current or historical information?
- How old is the information cited in the article/book?

Content

- Is the information relevant to your topic?
- Is the target audience appropriate?
- Is it written in an academic or scholarly language?
- How valuable is the information to your topic?

Accuracy

- Does it adequately explain the research methodology?
- Can you verify the accuracy in other sources?
- Do you recognise authors in the bibliography?
- Is it peer-reviewed?

Bias

- Is the research sponsored by an organisation?
- Is the author trying to sell or push a product or service?
- Do other authors agree with the author's point of view?

A Credible Source Will...

- Consider all FIVE criteria when choosing your sources.
- These criteria WILL be considered when lecturers are marking your assignment submissions.
- Using Non-credible sources will result in losing marks.

What is not a Credible Source?



Fake News

- If your source does not hit criteria, it could be considered 'fake news'.
- The Following definitions have been taken from Macquarie Dictionary (2020)

Term	Definition
Fake news	Disinformation and hoaxes published on websites for political purposes or to drive web traffic, the incorrect information being passed along by social media.
Misinformation	To give false or misleading information.
Disinformation	Misleading information supplied intentionally, as in counterespionage.
Propaganda	Dissemination of ideas, information or rumour for the purpose of injuring or helping an institution, a cause or a person.
Satire	The use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule, etc., in exposing, denouncing, or deriding vice, folly, etc
Clickbait	An attention-grabbing link on a website which turns out to be of spurious value or interest.



Academic Responsibility.

- When you consider your content for your assignments, you may be influenced by the news/TV Documentaries/Social Media/Newspapers/Word of mouth
- What we hear/see can highlight real societal issues, however...
- We have an academic responsibility to CHECK the facts.



Academic Responsibility

- In Higher Education, the sources that you use will be individually assessed to determine their credibility.
- This means that if you use a source that is not credible, you could lose marks.
- You have a responsibility as an academic to ensure that your sources are credible and considered when writing your assignments.
- CHECK YOUR FACTS!

Sources for Different purposes

Where can you get credible information from?

- Quick Facts
 - An Event Date
 - A Theorists name
 - Common Knowledge
- How could we find them?
 - Online search engine.
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes and No
 - Using the internet has the potential to guide you towards untrue facts or 'fake news'.
 - Follow the FIVE criteria.

Sources for Different purposes

Where can you get credible information from?

- Definition of a word
 - The meaning of a word
 - How it can be used
 - Other words that mean the same thing
- How could we find them?
 - Dictionary
 - Thesaurus
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes and No
 - Try to avoid using dictionary definitions within your assignments
 - it does not demonstrate your 'knowledge and understanding'.
 - Try to use it as a starting position for your own understanding of a subject.

Sources for Different purposes

- Background Information
 - Background of a topic
 - Historical Facts
 - Broad view of a topic
- How could we find them?
 - Books
 - Journal articles
 - 'A very short introduction'
 - Encyclopaedia
 - Google Scholar
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes and No
 - Getting a broad understanding of the topic is needed when exploring something new, however, this is probably not the most relevant information that needs to be in your assignment.

Sources for Different purposes

- In-depth Topic Review
 - History of the topic
 - Changes and major developments
 - Theories and Approaches
- How could we find them?
 - Books
 - Journal articles
 - Credible Websites
 - Peer Reviewed/Published work.
 - Google Scholar
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes
 - Using the FIVE criteria, select books, journals and websites that comply.
 - This is the information that needs to be within your assignment.

Sources for Different purposes

- Statistics
 - Demographic Information
 - Research Figures
 - Geographic Information
 - Sales Information
- How could we find them?
 - Office of National Statistics
 - Published research
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes
 - Use the FIVE criteria
 - This is the information that needs to be within your assignment.

Sources for Different purposes

- Recent Research
 - New developments
 - Review of past research
 - Analysis of research and what it means
- How could we find them?
 - Journal Articles
 - Literature reviews
 - Research Papers
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes
 - Use the FIVE criteria
 - This is the information that needs to be within your assignment.

Sources for Different purposes

- Legal Information
 - Legislation
- How could we find them?
 - UK Government Website
 - Welsh Government Websites
- Can we reference this source?
 - Yes
 - This is the information that needs to be within your assignment.

How to access resources



Books Versus Scholarly Books

- Books are valuable sources of information for research!
- You can access:
 - An overview of a topic,
 - The background of a topic,
 - References to other information.

But what is the difference?

- You can access Scholarly Books Via the UWTSD library.
- Order them yourself from Online retailers.
- Or find them Via Google Books or other online book viewing websites.

	Books	Academic Books
Intended Audience	Anyone	Students and academics
Purpose	General interest, opinion, sales	Define and discuss theories and practices, scholarly/academic information
Author	Anyone	Academics and qualified professionals in the field
Language	Simple, plain English	Discipline specific vocabulary
Referencing	Rarely included	In-text citations, bibliography
Appearance	Decorative images	Charts, diagrams, informational images
Indexing	Rarely included	Table of contents, indexing of key terms

Academic Journals

- Accessing Academic Journals will be an essential skill that you will need **throughout** your degree.
- You can access these via the internet or through the online Library.
- Let's demonstrate how to find and access academic Journals.

Academic Journals

- These are some of the main types of scholarly journal articles:
- Original research article
 - Reports on original research about new data or theories that have not been previously published. Includes a full Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussions sections. May also be referred to as a primary research article.
- Review article
 - Provide a comprehensive summary of research on a certain topic, and a perspective on the state of the field and where it is heading.
- Case study
 - An intensive study about an individual, group or community in which in-depth data is examined in relation to several variables.

	Academic / Scholarly Journals	Non-academic Journals
Example	• journal articles • conference papers • working papers • theses	• newspapers • magazines and trade journals (although some contain selected academic articles!) • newsletters • articles that have no bibliography (a prominent exception is Harvard Business Review)
References	In-text citations, Reference list at the end	Few or no references, self-referenced
Author	Academic or qualified professional in the discipline	Anyone, sometimes affiliated with a product or practice being promoted
Appearance / Format	Text based and may include tables, charts and figures, little or no advertising	Advertising, glossy images
Intended audience	Students, academics and other professionals in the discipline	Anyone
Bias	Weights and presents all evidence fairly	May provide only one view
Content	Discipline specific language, includes an abstract, generally substantial in length	Plain English, usually shorter articles

Websites

- Websites can provide valuable evidence to support your discussion, just like books or journal articles.
- Many authoritative sources such as academic institutions, government and research bodies, or charities use the internet to make important data available as quickly and freely as possible.
- However, unlike academic books and journals which are usually peer-reviewed before being published, websites can potentially be written by anyone. So, you do need to spend more time assessing their reliability.

How to find a Credible website

- A straightforward Google* search is easy - but it will give you millions of hits, most of which are irrelevant or not at the right level to use in your work. Search thoughtfully to save wasting time.
- Choose your search terms carefully.
 - Use speech marks to search for a phrase rather than separate words, for example "active reading".
 - Use advanced search features to limit language or year.
 - Consider whether there are synonyms for your search terms that you could also try.

How to find a Credible website

- Instead of searching Google try its academic version - Google Scholar or use the Library's own Summon search.
 - These search across journal articles, books, chapters, theses, and other academic sources.
 - Summon will show you resources you can read straight away as part of the Library's subscriptions,
 - You can also limit results to 'peer reviewed' to ensure you are view the best quality results.
 - Note that not all sites are indexed on Google Scholar and that some less reputable journals are included so you shouldn't rely on it.

Credible Sources in Practice: Task

- Please use your internet source to explore google Scholar, the Library Website and Online/E books.
- Think about your assessment Questions.
- Use this time to find resources that you could use.
- Ask questions if you are unsure, or for support to find what you are looking for.