

# Credibility assessment of peer- reviewed and non- peer-reviewed sources essay sampl...

[Science](#)



Doctoral students have a wealth of readily available information from which to conduct research. Not all of this information is credible. The challenge for the doctoral student is to pick high quality sources. This paper will discuss peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed sources, and how the CARS Checklist can help find credible material for research.

### Credibility Assessment of Peer-reviewed and Non-peer-reviewed Sources

In order to advance the current knowledge of their field, doctoral students must be able to assess the credibility of information. SINTEF, the largest independent research organization in Scandinavia, assessed that 90% of all the data in the world has been created in the last few years ("About SINTEF," n. d.; Dragland, 2013). This information is of an extensive variety, created for many purposes with a wide range of quality and reliability (Harris, 2013). To gauge credibility, students must understand the difference between peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed sources and utilize a method for assessing the credibility of those sources. Peer-reviewed Sources

Peer-reviewed, or refereed journals, refer only to journals where the quality of the published articles has been vetted by specialists (Engle, 2013). Journal editors submit articles to experts in the same field who act as impartial reviewers of the information (Bladek, 2013). Unlike non-peer reviewed sources, these articles usually include source citations (Engle). Articles that pass review and are accepted for publication epitomize the best research in the field (Bladek). Peer-reviewed sources are reliable sources of information.

### Non-peer-reviewed Sources

Non-peer-reviewed sources include substantive news, popular and sensational articles (Engle, 2008). Substantive news items may use reliable information sources, but popular and sensational articles seek to entertain or elicit strong reactions (Engle). Non-peer-reviewed sources may be inaccurate and have limited use in advancing knowledge in any field. In particular, non-peer-reviewed sources must be checked for credibility.

### Assessing Credibility

Known sources have a greater likelihood of providing credible information (Metzger, 2007). Whenever possible, researchers should gather information that provides the author's name, title or position, organizational affiliation, and contact information along with the date of creation or version (Harris, 2013). Once collected, the researcher can begin to evaluate the information quality with CARS.

To help separate the good quality information from bad information, Dr. Robert Harris created the CARS Checklist for Information Quality ("CARS Checklist," n. d.). CARS stands for credibility, accuracy, reasonableness and support (Harris, 2013). By using this checklist, doctoral students can collect valid information for their research.

With the CARS checklist, doctoral students can question the credibility of information by checking the authority of the author or publishing organization, as well as, the level of quality control (Harris, 2013). Accuracy can be assessed by its level of agreement with other sources, internal contradictions, its age and last update (Harris). The reasonableness of the information can be checked by attempting to detect bias and determining

<https://assignbuster.com/credibility-assessment-of-peer-reviewed-and-non-peer-reviewed-sources-essay-sample/>

the reason for creating the source document (Harris). Finally, support can be gauged by looking for listed data sources and ways to check them. Those resources that fair well during this check may be considered quality sources of information. Conclusion

Doctoral students can gather quality sources of information by using peer-reviewed articles and applying a CARS review to all possible sources.

## References

- About SINTEF. (n. d.). Retrieved from <http://www.sintef.no/home/About-us/>
- Bladek, M. (2013). Subject Guides. Evaluating Information Sources. What Is A Peer-Reviewed Article?. Retrieved from <http://guides.lib.jjay.cuny.edu/content.php?pid=209679&sid=1746812>
- CARS Checklist. (n. d.). Retrieved from <http://library.waldenu.edu/884.htm>
- Dragland, Å. (2013). Big Data - for better or worse. Retrieved from <http://www.sintef.no/home/Press-Room/Research-News/Big-Data-for-better-or-worse/>
- Engle, M. (2013). Cornell University Library Guides. Distinguishing Scholarly from Non-Scholarly Periodicals: A Checklist of Criteria. Introduction & Definitions. Retrieved from <http://guides.library.cornell.edu/scholarlyjournals>
- Harris, R. (2013). Evaluating Internet Research Sources. Retrieved from <http://www.virtualsalt.com/evalu8it.htm>
- Metzger, M. (2007). Making Sense of Credibility on the Web: Models for Evaluating Online Information and Recommendations for Future Research. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 58(13): 2078-2091, DOI 10. 1002/asi