

# Evaluating Academic Sources

Check the details of a publication for clues about its reliability as an academic source.

## Author's Qualifications

Is the author affiliated with a university or research institution? Do they hold a PhD in a relevant discipline? Look up the **author's credentials and institutional profile** or curriculum vitae (CV) for related publications. In the STEM fields, search an author's name in Scopus to discover information about their publications and scholarly profile. Check who is citing their work in *Scopus* or *Google Scholar*.

## References

Does the source include any references? **Credible research publications always list their sources**. By building upon other scholars' ideas and by making this process explicit through citations, academics establish credibility and authority. What do the references tell you about the breadth and currency of topic coverage? What do they reveal about the author's approach and biases?

## Peer Review

Is the work peer-reviewed or refereed? Unlike other publications, academic works undergo a peer-review process where they are critiqued by professional peers or *referees*. These are experts in a field called to evaluate potential publications or conference proposals. **Referees assess the quality of the writing and research** and may suggest changes to the original work before it is deemed fit for publication or presentation.

## Publisher / Tone / Layout

Is the publisher a **university press** or a **research institution**? Is it a professional association or a government organization? University presses and research institutions typically adhere to higher peer-review standards than other publishers. **Formal tone of writing, use of complex language, and plain layout** dominated by text differentiate academic from popular sources. In social sciences and STEM disciplines, sources may follow a **specific content structure** with headings that include an Introduction, Method & Procedure, Results, and Discussion.

## Publication Date

Does your topic require the latest information? Depending on your area of study and your academic task, you may need the most recently published information or older sources that reflect the history of the field.

## How Can I Tell If a Journal Is Peer-Reviewed?

- Visit the journal website and find the "About" section that often describes the journal's publication process and type of peer-review used.
- Look up the journal in **Ulrichsweb** periodicals directory (available from the library's home page in the **e-Encyclopedias, etc.** tab) to confirm whether it is peer reviewed.

- In some EBSCO databases, you can look up a journal by clicking on **Source** in the publication record of an article.

## Party Positions, Asset Ownership, and Economic Voting.

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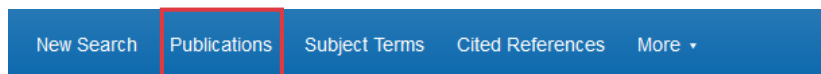
**Description:** Articles, research notes, short notes and comments for

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**Frequency:** 4

**Peer Reviewed:** Yes

- In some EBSCO databases, you can search for a journal in **Publications**, on the navigation ribbon, to look up its peer-review status.



- In both EBSCO and ProQuest databases, you can limit your search results to only peer-reviewed content by selecting the **peer review limiter**.

**Advanced Search** [Command Line](#) [Thesaurus](#) [Field codes](#) [Search tips](#)

AND

[Add a row](#)

Limit to:  Full text  Peer reviewed [?](#)

**NOTE OF CAUTION:** Editorials, letters to the editor, and other content from peer-reviewed journals that does not undergo the peer-review process may still appear in your search results even after you have filtered for peer-reviewed only content.