

Evaluate the Reliability of a Source

Academic research is based on reliable, factual information (Williams, 2013, p. 14). The following questions (taken from Mooney-Smith & Goss, 2015, p. 232) are useful for assessing how useful a source will be.

Questions	Comments
1. Who created the source?	Was it a company, a government department, a university, or an individual? For websites look at the domain name: .com (company), .gov (government), .edu (educational) for clues.
2. Where is the source from?	For websites look for address endings: .au (Australia), .uk (United Kingdom). Check for contact information such as names, email addresses, and telephone numbers for web creators.
3. When was the source created?	Is the information too old? Has it been updated, lately?
4. What is the purpose of the source?	Is it to inform, educate, persuade, or advertise?
5. Is the content of the source good quality?	Who wrote the article? Is the author credible? Can you identify any bias? Are there any active links? Are there references? Has it been reviewed by experts? (Generally, experts do not review the material on <i>Wikipedia</i> .)
6. What do others say about the source?	Follow any direct links. Can you find a review of the book?

References

- Mooney-Smith, P., & Goss, C. (2015). *A complete English for academic purposes program. Student book*. Oxford University Press.
- Williams, J. (2013). *LEAP advanced: Reading and writing. Learning English for academic purposes*. Pearson.