

Evaluating Citations

APSU Writing Center Handout

RADAR Citation Credibility Test

When conducting research for academic papers, it's crucial to assess the credibility and reliability of your sources. The RADAR Test provides a systematic way to evaluate sources based on **R**ationale, **A**uthority, **D**ate, **A**ccuracy, and **R**elevance.

Rationale

Rationale is the reasoning behind a claim or belief.

Literature reflects authors' goals and biases, but perspectives are valid if backed by logic and evidence.

- How relevant is the information to your assignment?
- What is the purpose and tone of this source?
- Does it show extreme bias or prejudice?
- Are alternative viewpoints considered?

Authority

Authority helps judge how credible an author is.

- What are the author's credentials and affiliations?
- Can you find information about the author online?
- Are they connected to an educational institution or reputable organization?

Date

Recent sources are more likely to be accurate and relevant.

- When was this information last updated?
- Are there newer studies or data that challenge it?
- Have new developments been published on this topic?

Accuracy

Accuracy ensures your references don't undermine your credibility.

- Are there any false or misleading statements?
- What does the consensus in the field say?
- Was the information reviewed or published by a credible source?

Relevance

Relevance ensures the source supports your ideas and engages your audience.

- Does it address questions in your thesis?
- Does it meet assignment requirements?
- Why was the information published in the first place?
- Would your audience find it meaningful or interesting?

Always cross-check multiple sources and consult your professor or librarian if you're unsure about a source's reliability.

References

Mandalios, J. (2013). *RADAR: An approach for helping students evaluate Internet sources*.

Journal of Information Science, 39(4), 470-478.

Stetson University. (2024, February). *RADAR Credibility Test*. Stetson Writing Center.

<https://www.stetson.edu/other/writing-center/media/Credibility%20Test.pdf>