Information & Literature Searching:

Evaluating Information: The REVIEW Method

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Criteria for evaluating information: REVIEW

■ R is for relevance:
  ■ Does the resource completely cover your topic or only one aspect of it? Have you read widely enough to determine how relevant it is in relation to other sources?

■ E is for Expertise of the author:
  ■ What is the educational background of the author? What are their qualifications? Are they writing in their area of expertise – are they an authority in the field? Are they regularly cited by other authors in the field?

■ V is for Viewpoint of the author/organisation:
  ■ What is the viewpoint of the author/organisation? Is s/he independent or in some way affiliated with the organisation? As a result, is there a bias in their work? Who has funded the research? Is the funder biased and is there evidence of this in the writing? What is the purpose of the publication – to inform, persuade or entertain?
I is for Intended audience:

Who is the audience? Is the writing aimed at the general public or a scholarly audience? Is it intended for practitioners and published in a professional/practitioner journal or for researchers and has it been published in a scholarly/peer-reviewed journal?

E is for evidence:

Are opinions supported by scholarly evidence? Is a particular referencing style used properly and consistently? Has the work been subjected to peer review? Who is on the editorial board? Who are they funded by?

W is for when?:

When was the piece of work published? How current is the argument? Has the argument been superseded by new theories/findings? Is the work appropriate for your review if it is dated and if so, why?