

# Finding the ***BEST*** information for your studies



INTO® MANCHESTER

Finding the best information means:

- Do **NOT** just use Google and accept the results you find!
- Do **NOT** use Wikipedia as the main source of your information for your studies; you can use it to get an understanding/ overview of the subject but use it **carefully** and check the source of the information that Wikipedia gives.
- You should make use of information that you can trust– that is, information that is reliable and truthful. See inside for how to do this!

If you are  
struggling to find  
what you need -  
ask the Learning  
Centre staff.  
They like to help!

Learning Centre Guide 17 Foundation/AE

Website: <http://intolearningcentre.co.uk>

Brightspace: Library Services then e-library

E-mail: [manchester.lrc@intoglobal.com](mailto:manchester.lrc@intoglobal.com)

Telephone: 0161 631 1222

## **Make sure you can trust information you have found!**

Whether you are using a book, newspaper, magazine or website, follow the clues to work out which information you can trust.

**Be a detective like Sherlock! Ask questions!**

**Why? Who? When?** and gather your evidence.....



### **WHY** has the information been produced and published?

Is the information produced by an organisation who is trying to sell you something?

Are they trying to get you to believe in a particular viewpoint? (so the information may be biased) What is their “agenda”?

**What clues** can you get from the **appearance** of the work?

Does the information look serious and professional?

Is it written in formal, academic language?

**Think about the “style” the information is written in Think about the language used.**

**Is it emotive?** For example, with newspapers, “**tabloid**” newspapers often use sensational language, usually about celebrities and sport, often poorly written and with a lack of detail.

Examples of tabloids include: *Daily Mirror, Daily Mail, Daily Express, the Metro, The Sun.*

Try and use “**broadsheet**” newspapers that use professional journalists and work within professional guidelines. Examples of broadsheets include *The Guardian, Financial Times, The Independent (online)* and *The Times*

Always ask  
for help if  
you are stuck!

### **Has the information been written as a joke/ hoax/ or to steal money?**

This can be particularly true of websites as anyone can set up a website; many websites offer no evidence for facts and views; some websites are hoaxes or fiction.

For example, see <http://zapatopi.net/treeoctopus/>

## **WHO** wrote the information? Do they have “authority”?

Who is the writer or publisher? Do you trust them?

Does the writer have good subject knowledge?

For example are they a University professor, teacher, politician, business person, writing about a topic in their subject area?

For books, check the back of the book– is there any information there about the author?

Look at the information you have found – think of it as a Court of Law! Has the author offered any **PROOF** for what they are saying?

Does the piece of work include a reading list or bibliography?

Throughout the article or book, does the writer tell you what works were used to support any findings?

**Has the information been “peer-reviewed”?** This means the work has been read and judged by other experts to be a valid piece of work.

**At University level, you should only be using academic articles that have been scholarly peer-reviewed**



**For websites: look at the URL to see if it from a source you trust:**

**Check its web address or URL for clues.**

For example: **.ac** or **.edu** at the end of a URL shows that it is a website from an educational institution

**.gov** at the end of a URL shows that it is a website from a governmental institution

**.org** at the end of a URL shows that it is a website from a not-for-profit organisation or charity

**co.** or **.com** or **.net** Can be anything!  
So you are advised to “Google” the website to see if it has been reported as a fake.

**Remember:  
W . W . W!**

**Why?**

**Who?**

**When?**

## **WHEN** was the book/ website written?

**What is the date?** You usually need up-to-date information unless it is a classic book on a subject or historical analysis of a topic. Is the date of the work acceptable for your needs?

**Remember:**

# Why? Who? When?

**If you use the special academic databases bought by INTO Manchester....**

## Case solved!

These special databases cover information **written with authority** by academics, specialists and experts.



**To log in to these databases from home, you need your OPEN ATHENS username and password.**

Once you have your OpenAthens details, go to

**<http://intolearningcentre.co.uk> OR in Brightspace Library Services then e-library.**

click on the **OpenAthens** logo and log in



***If you do not have a username/ password, contact the Learning Centre.***

You can pick up guides online and from the Learning Centre to use these INTO Manchester databases effectively and efficiently.

Guides include:

- **Ebsco Databases** (Guide 7a and 7b)
- **The Reviews** (Simple Guides 11 –16)
- **E-Books** (Simple Guide 17 & 18)
- **Issues Online** (Simple Guide 19)



Watch our help videos on our website **<http://intolearningcentre.co.uk>** or go to **Skills for Success** in Brightspace.