



EVALUATION AND ETHICAL USE OF INFORMATION

Introduction

Whilst studying here at Deakin you have learnt to critically analyse and question what you have read. You've also been taught to reference your work and correctly attribute the sources you used. As you prepare to graduate, it's a good time to refresh these skills and to learn how they differ in the workforce.

In this Module you will

- Extend your knowledge on critical reading and writing
- Be informed of your copyright obligations in the workforce and how they differ from being a student

Judging accuracy and reliability

Which information should you trust?

Peer reviewed material has been checked by an expert in the field, so you know it is:

- Current
- Accurate
- Reliable
- Evidence-based
- Reliably researched

[What is Peer Review](https://youtu.be/7Vc5bgyAXSU) (<https://youtu.be/7Vc5bgyAXSU>)

When you don't have access to peer reviewed material, it's up to you to be able to judge information for accuracy and reliability. It's also a skill that will help you to stand out as an employee.

One way to do this is using the CRAAP test. The CRAAP test is list of questions to help you evaluate the information you find. CRAAP = Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy and Purpose.

Currency: is the information up to date?

To make sure you're referring to information that is current, consider:

- When was the information created or updated?
- Do the links still work?
- Do you need the most up to date version, or is this an important piece or seminal work?

Remember, just because information is current, that doesn't mean it is reliable. You still need to use your skills to decide whether it is accurate.

Wondering when information becomes outdated? It depends on the information source and purpose.

Relevance: does it apply to the situation?

Does the information impact on you or your organisation? If your answer is yes, then it passes the relevance test!

Relevant information adds value because it can be applied to the situation, and help to inform decisions.

Accuracy: can it be verified?

Accuracy is about providing enough detail to verify a claim that's been made. In the workplace, accuracy is an expectation.

Before making or relying on a statement, ensure it can be verified with reference to data or other material, and preferably corroborated by a third party.

Where this is not possible, you should have a reasonable explanation for why you produced or relied on the information.

Relying on inaccurate material could be embarrassing; producing inaccurate material could cost you your job.

The Australian Securities and Investment Commission's (ASIC) guidelines for accuracy in advertising are a helpful resource for the workplace.

Do

- give current and correct information
- use appropriate language
- check that the overall impression is accurate
- back up claims with facts and documented evidence where appropriate
- note important limitations or exemptions
- correct any misunderstandings
- be prepared to substantiate

Don't

- guess the facts
- omit relevant information
- make ambiguous or contradictory statements or use unnecessary jargon
- make promises you cannot keep, or make predictions without reasonable basis

Source: [The Australian Securities and Investment Commission's \(ASIC\) guidelines for accuracy in advertising](http://bit.ly/2q2i2mk) (<http://bit.ly/2q2i2mk>)

Authority: who wrote it, and how credible are they?

Your information may be sourced by a single author, publisher, government department or a combination.

To verify who the author is and whether they have expertise to provide the information, consider:

- Are contact details provided or easily found?
- What is their expertise and experience in the area?
- Are they from a reputable organisation?
- Who maintains the information (the URL may indicate the author or source, i.e. .gov, .edu, .com, .org)?

Purpose: why did they write this?

Every piece of information is written with a purpose or intention, even if it's not apparent as you read it.

Investigate the reason behind the information by considering:

- Is the author trying to inform, educate, persuade or perhaps sell something?
- Is it a balanced piece or does it show obvious bias?
- Is the website sponsored or influenced by advertising revenue?

Copyright in the workplace

Students have special rights to use copyright material in assessments without permission. Outside the classroom, the law is different. To avoid legal problems and maintain your professionalism, it's important to understand copyright.

This next section gives you general copyright information for the workplace. We will also go through a number of common information types and the rules around their use.

General copyright laws

Online content is protected by copyright in the same way that physical items are. Whether or not you are able to use something depends on how you intend to use it and what rights the copyright owner grants to the public.

You can avoid getting into trouble by:

- Linking and using embedding code
- Adhering to licensing, permissions and terms of use
- Creating your own content
- Using content that is out of copyright or where the copyright has been waived

Copyright and Intellectual Property

Copyright is owned by the creator in the first instance, however, employment contracts tend to ensure that any works created by employees in the course of their tenure will be owned by the employer. This is also generally true for contracted hire situations. Additionally, employers may have different copyright or intellectual property policies that apply to different employees or different employment scenarios.

So it's really important that you read and understand your employment contract. Be aware of your employer's copyright or intellectual property policies and procedures, and how they affect you and your work.

Linking and using embedding code

Linking provides a digital pointer so people can access the content from the source. There is no copyright issue in linking, so long as the content you link to, has been made available legally and is not pirated.

Embedding content using code is similar as it creates a connection from your website to the hosted content. However, with embedding, it can appear as though you have copied material and are hosting it. To avoid this issue, include a note to advise the content is being embedded from the hosting site.

Licensing, permissions and terms of use

Terms and conditions are boring to read, but they're really informative around if and how you can re-use material from the website. Many websites allow "personal, non-commercial use" which is problematic because the two terms are connected meaning that it's only for your personal use and only in the instance that your personal use isn't commercial in nature.

Some websites will allow broader non-commercial uses which may allow you to post a copy on your business website, providing that your use isn't considered commercial (i.e. using the article for the purposes of generating a profit). You can be a commercial company but be using something for non-commercial purposes – it is the use that is important. If you're ever uncertain about whether your use is commercial or not, or are uncertain about the terms and conditions, seek assistance from a legal advisor within your place of employment to ensure that someone with expertise in reviewing contracts can make the appropriate interpretation.

Terms and conditions can act as a license to use content. In some instances, the terms and conditions may advise that content on the site is even licensed under Creative Commons. If this is the case, then you can re-use the content as allowed under the Creative Commons licence. You should already be familiar with Creative Commons, but if not, it's really helpful to know about and understand.

To find out more visit:

- [Our Creative Commons page](https://www.deakin.edu.au/library/copyright/the-basics/creative-commons) (https://www.deakin.edu.au/library/copyright/the-basics/creative-commons)
- [About the licences](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/) (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/)

Or watch:

- [Creative Commons licences explained](https://youtu.be/4ZvJGV6YF6Y) (https://youtu.be/4ZvJGV6YF6Y)

If the terms and conditions don't allow your use, remember you can also [ask for permission](http://bit.ly/2qic2Xp) (http://bit.ly/2qic2Xp). Contact the copyright owner, outlining what you'd like to use, how you plan to use it and for how long. Make sure that you get a response in writing, and keep it as [proof of permission](https://www.deakin.edu.au/library/copyright/the-basics/getting-permission-to-use-something) (https://www.deakin.edu.au/library/copyright/the-basics/getting-permission-to-use-something)

Out of copyright / copyright has been waived

Copyright lasts for the life of the creator +70 years, however, works where the creator died before the 1st of January 1955 will also be out of copyright due to an earlier law.

A copyright owner can elect to waive their rights. If they have done this, the work is free of copyright.

When works are free of copyright, either because the copyright has expired or the owner has waived their rights, they are legally considered to be in the 'Public Domain'.

News and Publications

If you copy and paste news and journal articles to your website, you're more than likely to breach copyright. Stay out of trouble by reviewing the terms and conditions of the news site or journal article.

If you can't copy and share the article based on the terms and conditions, or Creative Commons licence, then you could either:

- Provide a summary of the article and a link to where users can read the article in full.
- Obtain permission or a licence to reproduce the content on your website

Images

Again, taking things from the internet and reusing them without checking the copyright is a problem. The great thing about images is that there are heaps of different avenues for sourcing images legally.

You can:

- Rely on images that are licensed for re-use under Creative Commons, just make sure the licence covers your use and that you [attribute the work properly](http://bit.ly/2qzEDdP) (http://bit.ly/2qzEDdP).
- For more information on finding reusable images try these blog posts on "[Using Goggle Images to find re-usable images](http://bit.ly/2qCXvqd)" (http://bit.ly/2qCXvqd) and "[Finding re-usable images in Flickr](http://bit.ly/2qxsm9w)" (http://bit.ly/2qxsm9w)
- Use images that are in the [Public Domain](http://bit.ly/2qxIJmi) (http://bit.ly/2qxIJmi)(meaning that the copyright has expired or been waived).
- Subscribe to a [stock photography resource](http://bit.ly/2rxzD7s) (http://bit.ly/2rxzD7s) that will issue you with a licence to re-use images on your business website. Read the terms carefully to ensure you're purchasing photos you can use and check with your boss or supervisor before subscribing and making purchases.
- Commission images from a graphic designer or photographer. Make sure you consult with the legal expert at your company and have an agreement with the artist that outlines how the work can be used, now and in the future.
- Seek permission from the creator of an image that you want to use.
- Create your own. Just be careful if you are creating your own works that you're not copying substantial elements of someone else's work. A copy by hand is still a copy, so make sure that your work is suitably original.

Video

You are only able to make copies of YouTube clips that are licensed under Creative Commons. Most clips are licensed under the YouTube Standard Agreement and cannot be copied.

You can link to or embed them, but don't forget that anything you link to or embed needs to be available legally. It's an infringement to link to pirated material.

If linking or embedding isn't an option, then you could:

- Seek permission from the creator of the video.
- Commission someone to create an appropriate video for your business.
- Create your own video. If you create your own video, take care to ensure that any content you may include in your video, such as images and music, is copyright compliant.

What about GIFs?

GIFs have legal implications in Australia due to our narrow copyright laws. Whilst there is no case law in Australia to rely on as a precedent, there is still an element of risk, so it's best to consult with the legal expert in your company to find out their policy on using GIFs.

Music

Use of music is complex because it is usually written in a specific context and often have numerous copyright holders. Additional care needs to be taken if you intend to use music with moving images, you would need to obtain synchronisation rights from the copyright owners.

Options for music are:

- Purchase [stock or production music](http://bit.ly/2pZzHf2) (http://bit.ly/2pZzHf2) to suit your purpose.
- Obtain [relevant licences](http://bit.ly/2rkBrDE) (http://bit.ly/2rkBrDE) from the appropriate licensing bodies [APRA|AMCOS](http://bit.ly/2q2PzN0) (http://bit.ly/2q2PzN0) and the [PPCA](http://bit.ly/2qCSi1V) (http://bit.ly/2qCSi1V)
- Find music licensed under Creative Commons: [Legal Music For Videos](http://bit.ly/2rxxt1) (http://bit.ly/2rxxt1)
- Use music that is out of copyright or where the copyright has been waived.
- Seek permission from the copyright owner. Keep in mind that music contains layers of copyright, so you will need permission from the copyright owner(s) of the lyrics, the composition, the performing artist and the recording. APRA|AMCOS can help you identify and contact the copyright owner(s).