

**‘USING JOURNALS AND OTHER
SCHOLARLY PERIODICALS’**

Beverly J. Elliott

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Dr. Brian Hodges

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When writing a paper at the master’s level our professors often require us to use ‘scholarly sources.’ So why is this necessary? What can be achieved by the writer, the researcher and the reader? Dictionary.com describes scholarly as that which is ‘concerned with academic learning and research.’ When you want to corroborate your research or gather relevant information that is valid, up to date, well documented and that has been reviewed by other experts, you will want to look at scholarly material.

What constitutes something to be academic or scholarly (which means the same thing), you are looking consistently for a few things. Firstly, has the source been published, peer reviewed or refereed. Does the work have citations or a bibliography and who is the author? They should be an expert in their field of study, a professor, a doctor or have an advanced degree? Accessing information from a scholarly source will make the difference in the credibility of your work. However we must be aware that just because a source is credible does not make it academic so we must be careful. Popular magazines, periodicals and journals can be credible, but are many times written by a journalist or for that matter anyone, and target the general audience. In a scholarly source, you will look for a higher level of accuracy, confirmations from other experts, advanced language, and coming from a discipline of study. Their work is not usually written to the general public or regular circulation. The scholarly source at the onset of their research will take their time, go in-depth, and be reviewed by other scholars before their work is even submitted to be published. Therefore because of all that the work of an expert entails, it is considered to be authoritative in nature and still it must be reviewed. The purpose and perception of a project is academic and will take their research process, which is not rushed, to another level, and therefore will change the outcome of the student’s work.