How to Identify a Scholarly Article

Many of your professors require you to use scholarly or peer-reviewed journal articles rather than articles from popular magazines or free web documents.

**Scholarly journal articles** – are written by academics or scholars for other academics, report on original research or experimentation, contain footnotes and bibliographies, and are usually published by academic or scholarly organizations. Most but not all scholarly publications are peer reviewed.

**Peer Reviewed Journal Articles** – are scholarly articles that have been reviewed and approved by experts (peers) in the same subject area as the article’s authors before they are accepted for publication.

To determine if your chosen article is scholarly and/or peer reviewed (also called refereed) answer the following questions about the article(s). Answering ‘yes’ to most of the following questions is a good indicator that you have chosen a scholarly article. If in doubt, ask your Professor or one of the Library Resource Centre staff.

Does the **periodical title** indicate a specific subject area (e.g. American Journal of Nursing, Palliative Medicine)? __________________________________________

Does the **periodical title** contain the words *Journal, Studies, Research, Review*? __________________________________________

Are the **authors’ names** listed along with their degrees, titles or other credentials and/or the names of the institutions with which they are affiliated? __________________________________________

Is the **article** long – more than 4 pages? __________________________________________

Is there an **abstract** or summary of the article at the beginning of the article? _______

Does the **article** use technical language or specialized vocabulary? ____________________

Does the **article** include footnotes, a bibliography or list of references? ______________

Does the **article** contain charts, graphs and/or tables? ______________________________

Was the **article** cited in a subject-specific database (e.g. CINAHL, Health Source: Nursing/Academic, ProQuest Nursing Journals)? __________________________________________

*Remember to ask your Professor if you require more guidance on whether your articles are acceptable.*