

The Citation Integrity™ Glossary

Plain-English definitions for the terms you'll see across CiteAbility™ and the wider conversation about AI citation.

AI systems that write answers for people — chat assistants, AI search summaries, generated overviews — have to decide, claim by claim, whether a piece of content is dependable enough to rely on. CiteAbility™ gives that judgment a name and a shared vocabulary. This glossary collects the terms you'll run into most.

Citation Integrity™

The overall judgment of whether a piece of information is dependable, evidenced and attributable enough to be relied upon and cited in an AI-generated answer. It is assessed across eight Dimensions and expressed as one of four Decisions.

Controlled AI evaluation

An assessment run under fixed, disclosed conditions — a set model, a set framework version, a frozen evidence pool — so the result is repeatable and attributable to the content itself. This is different from real-world citation behavior (below), which depends on the live model, the live retrieval system and the specific question asked at that moment.

Real-world citation

Whether an AI system, at a given moment, actually surfaces or references a piece of content when answering a real user's question. No controlled evaluation, including CiteAbility™'s, can guarantee this outcome — it is influenced by factors outside any single framework's control.

The eight Dimensions

The eight angles CiteAbility™ judges every piece of content against: Source Authority, Entity Authority, Organizational Probity, Evidence & Citations, First-Hand Experience, Content Quality, Technical Accessibility, and Integrity Analysis. Each is described below.

Source Authority

Whether the source itself — the domain, publication or repository — is credible and appropriate for the subject: does it have a track record on the topic, is it the kind of source a reasonable expert would consult, does it carry the independence and topical depth the claim requires.

Entity Authority

Whether the person or organization behind the information is qualified and dependable for this specific claim. Authorship, institutional affiliation, declared expertise and prior reliability all matter — a source is only as strong as the entity standing behind the claim.

Organizational Probity

Whether there is material, verified information about an organization's conduct, transparency or standing that should affect reliance on its information. Verified official findings, adjudicated sanctions and an organization's own disclosures are recorded with provenance, status and date. Missing information is never read as misconduct, and unverified allegations are never treated as established fact.

Evidence & Citations

Whether the claims on a page can actually be substantiated — do the cited sources exist, resolve correctly, and say what they're claimed to say. This dimension catches missing references, broken links, misattribution and quotations taken out of context.

First-Hand Experience

Whether the source demonstrates genuine direct knowledge, testing or original evidence, rather than repeating what other pages already say. Original research, first-hand observation, measured data and disclosed methodology all carry more weight than unsourced repetition.

Content Quality

Whether the information is accuracy-oriented, complete, specific, current, internally consistent and appropriately qualified — rather than overstated, vague, contradictory or stale.

Technical Accessibility

Whether AI systems can actually discover, parse and attribute the information — crawlability, structured data, licensing barriers, rate limits, and whether the content can be attributed back to a stable location. A source can be authoritative yet effectively invisible to automated systems.

Integrity Analysis

Considering all seven other Dimensions together: is the available information, taken as a whole, coherent, appropriately qualified and suitable for responsible reliance.

The four Decisions

The four outcomes a Citation Integrity™ evaluation can reach: CITE, CITE WITH QUALIFICATION, VERIFY, and DO NOT CITE (each defined below).

CITE

Evidence and source integrity are sufficient for the content to be relied upon as-is.

CITE WITH QUALIFICATION

Useful evidence exists, but material caveats remain — the content is usable with an appropriate qualifier rather than as flat, unconditional fact.

VERIFY

Integrity is insufficient for confident use without further evidence — the content may be correct, but the available evidence doesn't yet establish that confidently enough to rely on it.

DO NOT CITE

A material integrity failure is present — the content should not be relied upon in its current form.

Citation Integrity™ Score

CiteAbility™'s proprietary, calculated output that combines the eight Dimensions into a single assessment and Decision for a specific piece of content. The underlying signals, weights and thresholds behind the Score are not publicly disclosed.

This is an educational self-assessment tool from CiteAbility™, not a formal Citation Integrity™ Score, Audit or a guarantee that any AI system will cite this content.