

# Library @

University of Kurdistan Hewlêr



## Website Evaluation

Research and evaluation skills are essential for the successful completion of:

- Assignments as students
- Projects /assignments at work

In fact 'by 2018 more than two-thirds of all jobs will require post-secondary education or some level of specialised training'. (U.S. Department of Labor). Specialised training where having the skills base that enables you to find, evaluate and use information is emphasised.

To not be overwhelmed by these requirements all students need to develop and maintain a credible level of critical thinking and research skills that can be reused throughout their professional and personal lives. A key element of that research skills base is website evaluation.

Read through the attached issues raised and use the questions posed to help you successfully develop and maintain one of the elements of the toolkit needed for your research; being a credible critical thinker.

### Authority

Anyone can create a website, so the first reviewing point is to find out the author's *identity* and his or her *qualifications* or *expertise* in order to determine the credibility and reliability of the information and/or advise they have provided.

A Web site author/publisher can be a person, a commercial company ([.com](#)), an academic institution ([.edu](#)), a government agency ([.gov](#)), a nonprofit organization ([.org](#)), a network of computers ([.net](#)), a government military agency([.mil](#)), or a country-specific ([.uk](#)) site.

From the answers to these questions you should be able to tell if the site is well regarded, credible, cited, and written by experts in the field - or if they/it is just after your data or money.

Knowing the authority will also help you identify in which category in the table below it belongs.

<i>Context</i>	<i>Types of Websites</i>
Content	Academic Google Books, Project Gutenberg, Mayo Clinic, Med Library, Springer, Sage, JSTOR, Ebscohost
Social Networking and Content Sharing	Answers.com, Facebook, Scribed, Slide Share, Yahoo Answers
Paper Mills and Sites Cheat Sites	All Free Essays, Essay Mania, Frat Files, and Other People's Papers
Encyclopaedias	Wikipedia, Britannica, Encyclopedia.com, Internet Movie Database
News and Portals	BBC News, The Examiner, The Huffington Post, The New York Times
Shopping Sites	Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Buy.com

We would be delighted to see you in the library at any time. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask and the staff will be more than happy to assist you

## Accuracy and currency

Some types of information must be updated with regularity while for others the pressure of currency is not there. A good example of this is any site which provides news stories (potentially needing minute by minute updates) or legislative information (needing changes every time it has been revised).

Always ask and answer the following questions when reviewing a potential new research source. Find out when the website you want to use:

- Was last revised, modified or updated
- Was last reviewed and by whom?

## Design

Review the information published on the page. Ask yourself:

- Is the site working properly?
- Is it well maintained?
- Are you receiving error messages because links are broken?
- Is this web site slow to load, or difficult to navigate, search and read?
- Do you like how the web site operates?
- Can you find information?
- Are Help screens available and actually helpful? Does the site provide a searchable feature/site map?

## Objectivity and Scope

Review the content held on the website. See if you can locate a link to information (e.g. about the organisation or mission statement) outlining the purpose for the website. Thoroughly explore the website to establish if the information is mostly subjective (biased or opinionated), objective (factual), or both. What is the purpose of the webpage or site? Is it a personal webpage? A company or organisation website? A forum for educational/public service information? A forum for scholarly/research information? Entertainment? Advertising? A forum for ideas, opinions or points of view? Are the arguments well supported? Are you able to contact the author/organisation? Does the site publish feedback from other users/ even critical feedback?

YouTube video-mercials on what is a good/bad website:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aem3JahbXfk>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N39mnu1Pkgw>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_qR5lpnXBE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_qR5lpnXBE)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oa66AxTbjxA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeyR30Yq1tA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LYqDKEsy9gE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1LGuNn9Q0bl>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSnm8u7UOwE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nK8sDYmJ-s>

Reference:

- <http://www.lib.umd.edu/tl/guides/evaluating-web>
- <https://www.doleta.gov/Performance/Results/AnnualReports/PY2014/UT.pdf>

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