Evaluating web resources

Why should I evaluate web resources?
- Anyone can publish information on the web (internet)
- There are no official moderators or standards for web content or search engines
- Web resources are constantly changing

How can I evaluate web resources?
You can evaluate a web resource by thinking about the following points:

Authority
Who has produced the information?
Is it a credible organisation or an individual?

Is there a way to contact them?

Are the sources of any information or statistics acknowledged?

Is the information only an extract of a wider piece of research? Trustworthy sites usually link out to other sources where their facts come from.

Has the site been linked to by other quality web sites?

Relevance
Is the site relevant to your research?
Are you looking for information about people belonging to a particular age group, gender and place of origin?

Is the information aimed at a particular audience or level of expertise? The language on a website can suggest the target audience.

Has the site been updated recently or is the information out of date? This isn't always obvious but can be seen on some websites.

Does the purpose of the site meet our needs?

Accuracy/ Objectivity
Why was the site created?
Is the author trying to make you think a certain way? Are they biased or one sided?

Are they trying to sell you something? Sometimes ads might not be so obvious, for example, blog posts can be written specifically to sell a product.

Is the author's tone calm and balanced? Articles fuelled by anger or extreme opinions are not going to be the best source of information.

Do the headlines match the article? Or are they simply designed to hook readers?

Is the author trying to educate the audience and present a balanced and factual picture? These are usually more accurate and objective sources of information.
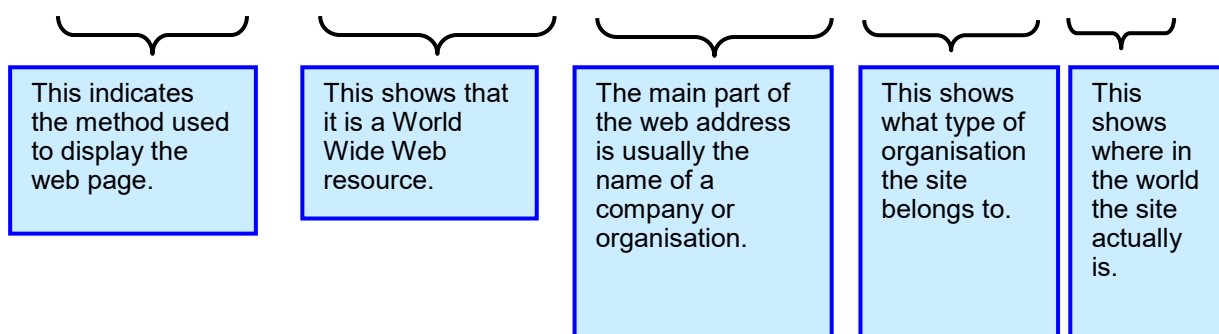
A Quick Guide to URLs

What is a URL?

URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator. A URL is a unique string of characters used to represent a web resource. A URL is also known as a resource's 'web address' or 'domain name'.

A URL is made up of several components which give clues about what sort of website you are viewing. Knowing what these components mean can help you decide about how useful a web resource it is.

<h1 style="color:blue; text-align:center">http://www.wuth.nhs.uk</h1>

This indicates the method used to display the web page.	This shows that it is a World Wide Web resource.	The main part of the web address is usually the name of a company or organisation.	This shows what type of organisation the site belongs to.	This shows where in the world the site actually is.

The ending of a URL, or its 'suffix', can give you clues about what kind of organisation it belongs to.

Below are listed some URL suffixes that you might recognise, and what they indicate:

.nhs.uk	UK National Health Service site
.co.uk	A UK commercial site
.com	Often a US company, but can be from anywhere
.gov.uk	A UK government website
.org.uk	A UK non-profit site
.ac.uk	An academic institution website in the UK
.edu	An academic institution website in the US

Visit our website at https://www.wuth.nhs.uk/choose-us/for-library-and-knowledge-services/ or contact us at:

McArdle Library
Arrowe Park Hospital
Tel: 0151 604 7223 ext 8610
Email: wuth.lks@nhs.net

WUTHstaff   **wuth.nhs.uk/staff**