Evaluating digital sources

Use this checklist when assessing the appropriateness of sources for your assignment.

Currency

☐   When was the page/website last updated?
☐   How much does the publication date matter in the context of your use?

Relevance

☐   How is this content relevant to your assignment?
☐   Does this information relate to the research questions that you want to address?
☐   Will it make a positive contribution and strengthen the arguments that you make?

Authority

☐   To what degree does the author have expertise in the topic?
☐   Does the material go through editorial/peer checks?
☐   What further research can you do to validate who the author is and their credentials?

Accuracy

☐   Is the text generally free from spelling, grammar and formatting errors?
☐   Is the origin of the information made clear?
☐   Does the author supply references and evidence to support statements that are not self-evident/well-known?

Purpose

☐   What are the reasons that underline the creation of this source/information: is it primarily to inform, inspire, sell, persuade, or entertain?
☐   Who is the intended audience for this information?

Objectivity

☐   Does the material promote any personal opinions or agendas?
☐   Is the text primarily evidence-based, or opinion-based?