How can I check the reliability of Internet research?

Since the vast majority of research is going to be undertaken online, how can learners work their way through the minefield of search results and hit on reliable and credible sources? The tips below are a useful start:

AUTHORSHIP

- Is the author identifiable? Never use a source whose author is not cited.
- Is the author a professional in their field?
- If the author's name is unfamiliar, is the site linked to an established authority on the subject?
- Has this author been cited by professionals or by another respectable website?
- Does the website belong to an individual, or is it part of a site maintained by an organisation, academic institution, or other group?

PUBLISHING BODY/PUBLISHER

- Is the type of material appropriate i.e. academically robust?
- Is the site sponsored by a respected organisation?
- Is this the author's own site?

HOW RECENT

- Can you identify the date the article was written as well as date(s) revised?
- Does the site include information on how often the site is updated?
- Is there a copyright and date listed?
- Is there evidence of 'linkrot'? Linkrotted sites no longer exist or have simply moved.

PERSPECTIVES

- Can you identify the goals of the site and are these goals clearly stated?
- Is the perspective appropriate?
- Are all sides of the issue fairly presented?

ACCURACY OR VERIFIABILITY

- Does the source include a bibliography and/or citations that can be used for comparing or verifying data and other information?
- Do many mechanical errors (e.g., grammatical errors, typos, etc.) appear in the text?
- Which search engine did you use and is it reliable?