The five w’s of internet searching

WHO?
- Who has published the website? Just remember, anyone can publish on the internet
- Are you able to contact the author via the website? It is easy to set up a false e-mail address

WHAT?
- What does the URL (web address) tell you?
- Sites with the address .ac.uk e.g. http://www.ncl.ac.uk/ are academic institutions such as colleges or universities, and so will be reliable sources of information
- Sites with the address .co.uk e.g. http://www.mcdonalds.co.uk/ukhome.html are companies and may try to sell you something or have a particular bias.
- Is the purpose of the site clearly stated? Is there an “About us” section?

WHEN?
- When was the site last updated? Is the information current or out of date?

WHERE?
- Where does the information originate?
- Is there a bibliography or list of sources used?
- Are there external links to other sources of information - websites on related topics?

WHY?
- Why should you use this website? Is the information relevant to your needs?
- Is it more relevant than other websites you have looked at?