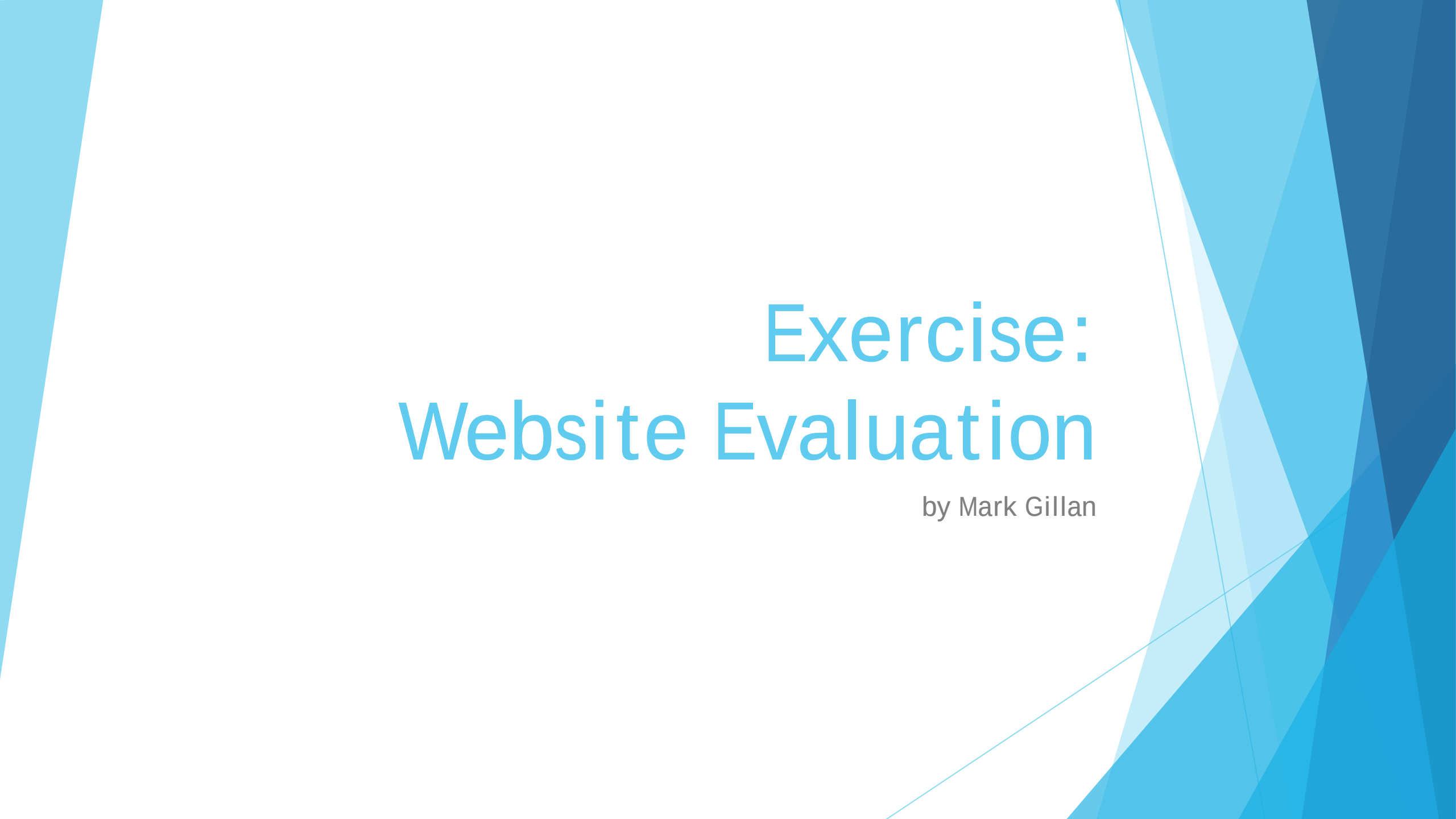


The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the slide, framing the central white area where the text is placed.

# Exercise: Website Evaluation

by Mark Gillan

# Website Evaluation x 2

- ▶ Using the headings provided (next page) and referring to the example provided, select two websites you have located online from your searching
- ▶ We should never accept EVERYTHING we read or hear as being FACT unless it possibly satisfies certain criteria. Although, nothing can be perfect in respect of being totally factual but we can trust some information more than others
- ▶ For example, your lecturer is trained and qualified to provide you with information. Your lecturer will always attempt to check information for academic integrity and continue to use academic experience in conjunction with their knowledge
- ▶ Would you trust some newspapers, magazines and everything you hear in the street from people who might not fully check the trustworthiness of their own sources of information?
- ▶ Evaluate two websites to gauge trustworthiness of the information ... see the next page for headings to use within your website evaluation for each website you located during your search for information
- ▶ Ensure you are guided by the example provided
- ▶ The last pages of this document explain each heading
- ▶ Save your first website evaluation document as: website\_eval1
- ▶ Save the second website evaluation document as: website\_eval2

# Website Evaluation Headings

- ▶ Name of website
- ▶ Website Address (URL)
- ▶ Currency
- ▶ Reliability
- ▶ Level of Difficulty
- ▶ Bias
- ▶ Relevance
- ▶ Appropriateness of format
- ▶ Other / Summary

# Currency

- ▶ How current is the information provided?
- ▶ How up to date is the information?
- ▶ Is there a date for when the information was posted or edited?
- ▶ Does the information directly relate to current news, legislation or other websites that are not replicating every part of the article?
- ▶ Some websites advise when the material has been written or updated. You can also find out by looking at other websites that might mention old news and this would assist in your decision as to currency.

# Reliability

- ▶ How reliable is the information provided?
- ▶ Have you been told something by a website which turns out later to be slightly inaccurate or they have taken information from a strange source?
- ▶ Who wrote the web page?
- ▶ Have they any academic qualifications or any valid expertise?
- ▶ Is it information based upon a valid source?
- ▶ To academically use data we should know the source to enable us to judge the status, does the web page divulge the source?
- ▶ In other words, could you trust all the information from the website in the future? You need to justify your response.

# Level of difficulty

- ▶ Was the website easy to use and navigate?
- ▶ Give your reasons, explain the website level of difficulty.
- ▶ Did you find the links easy to identify, could you read the website or was the text too colourful or distracting pictures?

# Bias

- ▶ We need to know if information is biased towards the authors own intentions and whether the information can be used without flaw.
- ▶ If a website is authored by an organisation selling alcohol, are they telling you their products are good for you and will not cause any side effects or indeed showing medical evidence showing the liver loves alcohol in large quantities!
- ▶ Is there any element of bias?
- ▶ Is the bias such that you can take into consideration?
- ▶ Did they show a bias or is the information quite independent?
- ▶ If a website is selling holidays, they will tell you the building site next to the hotel room is actually a local attraction. The website might also think 2 miles to the beach is “easy access to the local beach”. So, think about the information provided and how you might have to review whether it is bias or not.
- ▶ Give reasons, do NOT just say “biased” or “independent of any bias” ... say why you think this and try to provide justification for your opinion of bias

# Relevance

- ▶ How relevant to your search was the website?
- ▶ Would you use the website again or do you think other websites might provide information more relevant and in full?
- ▶ Web designers want you to view their web pages no matter what you are searching for. They might push up the search engine listings and you might find the website is not relevant to your search or it might be partially appropriate to your search.



# Appropriateness of format

- ▶ Was the web page too wide or too long?
- ▶ Was it acceptable to print?
- ▶ Was it okay to read?
- ▶ Was the web page in a strange file format that your computer could not view correctly?
- ▶ Did they have nothing but movies or large files?
- ▶ Was the website full of advertisements and / or flashing images that had been distracting?
- ▶ Did links work without any waiting or have files that might even contain viruses or did the website offer information in a nice easy to handle way?

# Other

- ▶ Any other news related to websites – something that might assist you in the future when looking at websites. Good / Bad / Ugly.
- ▶ Summarise your website evaluation