

# Media Literacy by Design Self-Assessment



**Name of the platform: Google Search**

**Date: 28/2/2025**

## **Purpose of the document:**

This document has been designed for online services<sup>1</sup> to demonstrate how their work and products align with the [Best Practice Principles for Media Literacy by Design](#). As you engage with this assessment, consider the following key areas:

1. **Proactivity, priority, transparency and accountability;**
2. **User-centric design and timely interventions;**
3. **Monitoring and evaluation.**

Ofcom recently became the UK's online safety regulator following the Online Safety Act 2023 (the Act) becoming law. Ofcom's media literacy work will make an important contribution to the implementation of the changes under the Act, in particular the changes to Ofcom's media literacy duties introduced by the Act. However, this work should not be interpreted as a statement of our policy on other guidance or our codes of practice under the Act or prejudice any further work to develop policy in relation to that Act. Whilst there are close links between the policy areas of media literacy and online safety, they are distinct. Our media literacy work, which includes these principles, is broader in scope than online safety, in terms of both the content and services to which it applies. In addition, as a voluntary initiative we have more discretion in the recommendations we make here than in the online safety codes. Our media literacy work goes beyond requirements specified in the Act to consider what more online services can do to support people to use, understand and create online media and communications in a variety of contexts.

With this in mind, materials submitted here may be repurposed for Ofcom's work under the Act.

We would like you to engage in a reflective process. This self-assessment form invites you to analyse how your organisation approaches media literacy on-platform (as part of the design process or through on-platform interventions).

- We specifically encourage you to identify potential areas for improvement you would like to focus on over the next few months. This approach allows us to better understand how platforms

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<sup>1</sup> Platforms/online services include social media, search, video-sharing and gaming services.

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monitor and evaluate media literacy interventions on an ongoing basis, whilst allowing us to further encourage the adoption of the principles.

- We ask that you define what success looks like, and how this will be measured for each piece of work to promote media literacy on-platform. As per principle 11, we ask that you establish media literacy outcomes and media literacy outcome indicators wherever possible.<sup>2</sup>

This self-assessment exercise is also an opportunity to share knowledge with a broader audience. Other services, academics, charities, and the general public can learn from what's currently working well and what challenges exist. We may wish to use some of the self-assessment completed to publish a summary of the work being undertaken by platforms. We would be in touch on the specifics before publication, however, it is worth flagging if there is anything commercially sensitive or confidential in your response at this point. Transparency and knowledge sharing has been [a recurrent ask from stakeholders](#). By fostering open communication and sharing insights, we can collectively enhance our understanding and drive positive change, leading to a collective commitment to media literacy.

In responding to the questions in this document, we encourage you to assess your practices and the extent to which they align with Ofcom's Best Practice Principles for Media Literacy by Design as part of actively contributing to a more informed and media literate society. We want to make knowledge sharing a formal aspiration for online services to ensure that everyone has clarity over the work that is being done and to foster collaboration between stakeholders.

Contact: If you have any questions about the Media Literacy by Design project, please feel free to get in touch with the MSOM team ([makingsenseofmedia@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:makingsenseofmedia@ofcom.org.uk))

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<sup>2</sup> Media literacy outcomes are ideally a benefit received by the target audience to be achieved as a result of the work. Media literacy outcome indicators are measurable pieces of evidence that allow users to track the change that has taken place as a result of their intervention.

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### Proactivity, priority, transparency and accountability

Please provide an update of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

Google Search continues to spearhead investments in in-product context features such as the “ATX” suite of information literacy features, information literacy programs like Super Searchers, and recently, proactively published a white paper on [Determining Trustworthiness Online Through Provenance and Context](#).

As generative AI becomes more accessible and widespread, concerns about the ability for people to determine the trustworthiness of content they see online have become more prevalent and urgent but “Is this AI-generated?” is not the same as “Is this trustworthy?”. Though the two questions can overlap, more is needed to empower informed decisions to help people get more context about what they see online. Google’s new white paper sets out Google’s three-pronged approach to helping users better understand what they see online:

- assertive provenance (information about how a piece of content was made, often from its creator) e.g. [SynthID](#)
- inferred context (information about a piece of content from the open web) e.g. [About This Image](#)
- off-platform investments in information literacy e.g. [Super Searchers](#), [Be Internet Legends](#), [Prebunking](#).

Please provide an update of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

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To further demonstrate adoption of the principles of proactivity, we have been sharing the white paper with key academics, researchers and community organisations in a series of expert roundtables.

The Super Searchers program is being expanded globally, with ambitions to train 30,000+ intermediaries in 10 countries in 2025.

## User-centric design and timely interventions

Please provide an update of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

Last year, About This Image [launched on Circle to Search and Google Lens](#), giving people more entry points for using this feature.

To equip users with more information about image provenance, if an image contains [C2PA metadata](#), people will be able to use our "[About this image](#)" feature to see if it was created or edited with AI tools.

The [Super Searchers program](#) is a global information literacy training-of-trainers program, developed in consultation with top information and media literacy experts. The program embodies user-centric design and timely interventions through its focus on training intermediaries such as librarians, and teachers. This approach recognizes that users are more likely to trust and adopt information literacy practices when they are taught by individuals they already trust and respect.

Success is measured by tracking the number of intermediaries trained and the reach of these intermediaries within their communities.

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In India, our partner [Mahattattva](#), has successfully localized the training for students. In Japan, working with the Miyagi prefecture, the training is localised for older populations, who are at risk of being targeted by scams. We find that localisation efforts are the best way to center the user through this program. We are exploring partnerships with more vulnerable groups.

In the UK, our Be Internet Legends programme has enjoyed particular success. We've trained 9.5M children aged 7-11, reached 80% of UK primary schools, delivering free online safety resources and assemblies to classrooms.

Please provide an update of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

Some of the features that we explore in Super Searchers are About this result, About this page, and About this image. The Google Search team held multiple 1:1s and focus groups – in addition to user research – so that these product features were built to best help people get more context about what they're seeing online.

For more information on these efforts, please see the following blog posts:

- [About this result](#)
- [About this result and Super Searchers](#)
- [About this page](#)
- [About this image](#)
- [New ways to access About this image](#)

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### Monitoring and evaluating

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Please provide an update of how your platform already demonstrates adoption of at least one principle in this category. How is success measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

We are transparent about the ATX suite of features through [our reporting as part of the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation](#).

The Super Searchers program tracks key metrics such as the number of training events, the number of participants trained (trained intermediaries and estimated end users), and the number of partners. We also include individual case studies, as each country's context and partnership is unique. Ecorys [led a proactive assessment](#) of our information and media literacy interventions in Europe, which highlighted and analysed the work of [Super Searchers, Prebunking and Be Internet Awesome](#).

Please provide an update of how your platform can make more progress to further demonstrate further adoption of principles in this category. How will success be measured (please provide media literacy outcomes and indicators wherever possible)?

Search continues to be updated and tested rigorously. To learn more about testing and evaluation practices for Google Search at large, please see [this page](#) on our How Search Works website.