Welcome

Advanced search strategies for Postgraduate Research Students

Please take a seat & log in to a PC
What is the literature?

- Journals (professional, trade).
- Books (monographs, textbooks).
- Conference proceedings.
- Theses & Dissertations.
- Technical reports.
- Company publications.
Journal Literature – Why?

• Authoritative/expert researchers/peer-reviewed.

• Highest quality/robust methodology.

• Articles are indexed in specialist databases.

• Up to date.

• Specialist/in-depth.

• International.
Types of journal: 1
the peer-reviewed journal

• The best quality information.

• Also known as “scholarly journals” or “refereed journals”.

• Articles are the results of recent research.

• Experts examine the methodology, the analysis, the data and the conclusions before the paper can be published.
Types of journal: 2
the review journal.

- Publishes articles which summarise recent progress in a topic.
- Evaluates the significant papers.
- Useful for new researchers as a starting point.
Other journals (weeklies, professional magazines).

- Articles written by journalists, not researchers.
- Good for current affairs.
- Useful, but not a substitute for scholarly journals.
Common problems when literature searching

• Not finding enough information

Broaden your search by using less specific terms. Include synonyms or related terms. Make sure that you are searching the most appropriate resource.

• Getting too many results

Narrow your search by using more specific terms. Combine search terms to find resources that cover all of your topics. Use phrase searching or proximity searching.

• Finding the wrong type of information

Make sure that you are searching the most appropriate resource. Limit your search results. Use academic language.
Planning your search...
Devising a search strategy

Think about your topic & identify your keywords

Plan how you will keep a record of:

• Where you searched
• What you searched for
Top tips for identifying keywords...

Think of terms/keywords that best describe or express your topic

Look at encyclopaedias, subject dictionaries and other reference sources

Think of alternative terms/words for your topic e.g. related terms, broader terms, synonyms
A database thesaurus

• A thesaurus is a list of the “subject headings” or “descriptors” used by the database for indexing purposes.

• Identifying the best terms used by the thesaurus will get you better results e.g “intercountry adoption” will find more than “overseas adoption”.

• Not every database has a thesaurus.
  – ProQuest and EBSCO do have a thesaurus.
  – Web of Science & Scopus do not.
**Example topic:**

Strategic planning for growth in chocolate manufacturing companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
<th>Concept 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chocolate manufacturing</td>
<td>growth</td>
<td>strategic planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>companies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Alternative terms, synonyms**

| chocolate industry        | Expansion              | business planning          |
|                          |                        |                            |
| confectionary industry    | Diversification        | corporate planning         |
| candy industry            | business development   | strategic management       |
| Cadbury’s, Mars, Nestles, | innovation             |                            |
| Thorntons                 |                        |                            |
Keeping a record of your search

Planning a literature search – choosing the best terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative terms/alternative spellings/plurals/narrower or broader terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesaurus terms/subject headings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Database checklist: Scopus; Web of Science;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plan
Search
Record
Review
Revise

The literature searching cycle
Using databases effectively: top tips and tools.

Search operators & Search tools.
Search operators and how they can help...

**AND**
- **Use to:** focus your search and link terms
- **Outcome:** will give you FEWER results

**OR**
- **Use to:** search for alternative terms & synonyms
- **Outcome:** will give you MORE results

**NOT**
- **Use to:** exclude results containing the term
- **Outcome:** EXCLUDES irrelevant items from your results
comput* finds:
computer
or
computing

wom?n finds:
woman
or
women

Use to: keep keywords together
Outcome: fewer, but more RELEVANT results
Choosing a database:

- Ensure your literature search is complete & comprehensive.
- Search all relevant databases
Welcome to the Library Guides

Each College and discipline has its own personal Subject Library Team to support their student, staff and researchers’ information and research needs. We have created a series of Library Guides to help you find advice on using the library to find information for your assignments, essays and projects.

Showing 14 Subjects

- Arts & Humanities
- Celtic Studies
- DACE (Department of Adult Continuing Education)
- Engineering and Sports Science
- Gwyddorau Dyffryn ac Llwyddiannus
- Human & Health Sciences
  - Ageing & Gerontology
  - Childhood Studies
  - Education
  - Health and Social Care
  - Health Sciences (General)
  - Healthcare Science
  - Midwifery
  - Nursing
  - Osteopathy
  - Paramedic Science
  - Psychology
  - Public Health, Policy & Management
  - Social Policy
  - Social Work

Choose your College/School
Choose subject area
Recommended Databases to Search

Key Databases

- **ASSIA**
  - Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts on the Web is an indexing and abstracting tool covering health, social services, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, race relations and education. Updated monthly, ASSIA provides a comprehensive source of social science and health information for the practical and academic professional. ASSIA currently contains over 375,000 records from over 500 journals published in 15 different countries, including the UK and US.

- **CINAHL**
  - The world’s most comprehensive source of full-text for nursing & allied health journals, providing full text for more than 1,300 journals. CINAHL Complete is the definitive research tool for all areas of nursing & allied health literature and supports nursing and allied health professionals, students, educators and researchers.

- **HINIC**
  - The Health Management Information Consortium contains details of articles and books in health management, social care, social policy and community care.

- **Medline**
  - MEDLINE provides authoritative medical information on medicine, nursing, dentistry, veterinary medicine, the health care system, pre-clinical sciences, and much more. MEDLINE uses MeSH (Medical Subject Headings) indexing with tree hierarchy, subheadings and explosion capabilities to search citations from over 5,400 current biomedical journals.

General Management Databases

- **Business Source Complete**
  - Business Source Complete is the world’s definitive scholarly business database, providing the leading collection of bibliographic and full text content. As part of the comprehensive coverage offered by this database, indexing and abstracts for the most important scholarly business journals back as far as 1888 are included. In addition, searchable cited references are provided for more than 1,300 journals.

More Resources

- **Dissertations & Theses**
- **NICE Evidence Search**
- **Evidence Based Resources**

- **Newspaper Databases**
- **Grey Literature**

- **Theses Collection**
- **Dissertations & Theses**
- **ETHOS**
Choosing a database: general

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Web of Science</strong></td>
<td>Multi-disciplinary; 1971- Journal articles &amp; conference papers; Cited reference searching, as well as keyword searching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Social Science Citation Index)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scopus</strong></td>
<td>Multi-disciplinary 1960- Journal articles, books &amp; book chapters, conference papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are large elite international databases used by researchers around the world. Contain citation data.
# Choosing a database: specialist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Database</th>
<th>Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSIA (ProQuest)</strong></td>
<td>Health, social services, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, race relations and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scholarly journal articles plus trade literature and reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thesaurus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ProQuest Biology journals</strong></td>
<td>Biosciences,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mostly full text. Scholarly journal articles <strong>plus</strong> magazines and trade literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thesaurus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting the bigger picture – Going beyond Swansea University

Swansea University subscriptions

All of the information on your topic

Free

COPAC

Document Supply Service

Google and Google Scholar

SCONUL
Site search

Child poverty site:.wales.gov.uk

Title field search

allintitle: child poverty
Peer-reviewed articles
Keyword / Title search
Access to abstract, references & citations
Identify review articles
Access to full-text
Integration with Endnote

Google Scholar is quick & easy to use but the trade-off is that it lacks some of the flexibility & search tools of the commercial databases.

Don’t rely on it exclusively!
Summary

✓ Devise a search strategy

✓ Keep a record of what you have searched for where

✓ Use the Library Guides to identify appropriate resources

✓ If you’re struggling you can contact your subject librarian team – we’re here to help you.
Find us on LIBGUIDES

Twitter: @SwanseaUniLib
Facebook: /swanuni.iss

Any questions?
Please contact your subject team...