

4 OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO USE THEM

As you study you will explore the tools of your chosen subject. For most courses the library is a vital part of the learning you undertake. The extensive range of books, academic journals, and electronic sources such as CD Roms, will prove invaluable and increasingly necessary as you progress through your course. At the beginning of your course you will be provided with a reading list and this will be your starting point.

LIBRARY



Sign up for any tutorial sessions being run by the library as soon as possible. If you are unsure how to use the library systems, then you should ask one of the staff. Do not fear that you will appear 'stupid'. Everyone has to learn how to use the library systems and these can be very different in various libraries. The staff are employed to help you! To succeed as a student in Higher Education, one of the most important things you will have to do is to learn to ask for help and this will be especially vital in the library. It is usual to need a lot of help with accessing library resources until you are used to the systems. There will probably be a specialist subject librarian for your subject.

Check the library catalogue to find books on your topic. You will need the author's surname and initials and the book title. Be prepared to go beyond the list you have been given, the reading list is likely to be a sample of what is available and it is quite likely that these books have already been borrowed. Once you establish where in the library the books on your list are located, it will be much easier to look through other books in the same section to locate information relevant to your topic, but be selective!

There will be restrictions on the number of books you can take out, as well as restrictions on the length of time that you can have the book before renewing or returning it. There will be fines for late

return. It is likely that you will be able to reserve books and to recall them from other students. There will also be a system for inter-library loans – that is for obtaining books from other libraries which are not held in your own.

The library will have a reference section of books that can only be used in the library. This will contain specialist books on different subject areas as well as dictionaries and encyclopaedias. However, libraries do not just contain books, but house many primary materials for investigation such as statistical, legal, government, scientific papers, newspapers (both current editions and databases of earlier editions), as well as video and audio materials.

Perhaps the best, and least familiar to you, sources of information will be found in academic journals. Current – recently published – journals are a source of information that is much more up to date than that contained in the majority of books in the library. They are published at regular intervals during the year and are collected into numbered volumes. You should become familiar with the journals that are kept by the library and where to find those that are relevant to your subject area. Articles in current journals that are relevant to your topic will contain very useful bibliographies which can help you to research further. The library will hold archives of back copies of all the journals it takes and you should ask how to access these. There will be an index for each title in which you can look up key subject words to locate editions that may be of use to you.



- For further advice see section 4: 'OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY' - Glossary.

'Moving On':

section 4:

OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO USE THEM

INTERNET

Information is increasingly published electronically. You will probably be given a list of useful internet web pages on your course reading list and this will look something like the following:

<http://www.the-times.co.uk/> - this is the web site of **The Times newspaper**. You will need a password to log on to your university web site and then you should type in the web page address to browse through the information that comes up on the computer screen. It is vital to type in the spaces, dots, dashes etc. of the address exactly.

The usual way of searching for information if you do not have a specific web address is by using a 'search engine'. This will allow you to enter key words for your topic. To narrow down the search try to be as precise as possible and use a group of keywords. Examples of good search engines to try are:

www.google.com/
www.alltheweb.com/
www.dogpile.com/

You will be able to attend a course run by your university to assist you with accessing information via the internet if you have not managed to do this before starting your course.



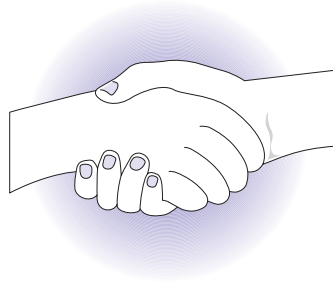
- **For additional more detailed help on using the internet jump ahead to section 6: 'RESEARCH WITH THE WORLD WIDE WEB'.**

The internet connects computers all over the world and there is no owner of the information. It has been likened to the world's largest library containing millions of pages of information of varying interest and usefulness. There is little editing or censoring of information and, as anyone can put information on the net, you must be very cautious about the validity of what you find there. For this reason it is wise to use only that information which is from a well-known source such as a university web site or an academic journal. In Britain university sites always end in **ac.uk**. In the USA they end in **edu**. Be careful, there is a wealth of very poor undergraduate essays on the web!

ALWAYS KEEP AN ACCURATE NOTE OF THE SOURCE OF YOUR INFORMATION, WHETHER IT IS A BOOK, JOURNAL, WEB SITE OR OTHER SOURCE. You might not be able to locate it easily again and you will need to include it as a reference in any of your own work!

PEOPLE

People are the best resource for us all. There are particular groups of people who will be able to help you to help yourself.



Other Students

As a new student you will find it invaluable to have the support of students who have already got through the teething troubles of moving on. See if your university has a support network, such as a 'buddying system' where existing students meet with newcomers to share support and advice. If no such group exists you might like to try and set one up. Within your own year group you will automatically make friends and you will support each other. Try to make the best use of your friendship networks by ensuring that you all exchange telephone numbers or e-mail addresses and are able to keep in close contact.

Your time management and effectiveness of study will be enormously enhanced if you can arrange to go to the library together to share and discuss background reading and if you can review lectures together and discuss ideas and share information.

Tutors and Advisors

You will rely on your tutors to facilitate your learning, to provide the necessary information, and to support your studies. You will probably be allocated a tutor to be your 'Personal Tutor'. This is someone, not necessarily from the same subject area as that which you are studying, whose job it is to be concerned for your personal and academic welfare.



They will be the person who will write you a job reference. You should make the most of this resource and be sure to meet with the personal tutor on a regular basis. There are many other people within the university who will be important to you and you should be confident about approaching them for assistance and advice. These people will include, for example, librarians, IT support staff to assist with computer problems, and secretarial staff who will help you make contact with tutors. In addition there will be support services provided through the Students' Union, and by the university. Discover what these are and where they are located. These services will give advice on matters such as finance, study skills, counselling, accommodation, careers, grievances, disability.

Last, but certainly not least, are your family and friends. The people around you at home will be most supportive if you let them share with you the experience of studying. If you involve them from the beginning, they will be best placed to help you to succeed. There is enormous pressure on your time but make time for them, and they will make time for you. Talking things through and asking for help should be the rule, not the exception!

'Moving On':

section 4:

OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO USE THEM

section 1

section 2

section 3

section 4

section 5

section 6

section 7

section 8

A GLOSSARY OF RESEARCH TERMS

ABSTRACT

1. A brief summary of a book or article.
2. An index which includes abstracts.

ANTHOLOGY

A collection of selected musical or literary works or excerpts.

ARCHIVE

A repository of documents or other material, usually of historical value.

ARTICLE

A brief self-contained essay on a topic, usually found in periodicals or encyclopaedias.

AUDIO RECORDING

A recording of sound; LP, or compact discs and tapes are all audio recording formats.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASE

A database which contains information pertaining to publications such as books, periodical articles, essays, and government documents.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A list of books, articles, electronic sources, scores, etc. on a specific topic.

BOOLEAN SEARCHING

Named for mathematician George Boole, Boolean searching uses mathematical set logic to combine search terms. Boolean operators **and**, **or**, and **not** are used in Boolean search statements to specify the logical relations among terms.

BROWSE SEARCHING

In browse searching, one is limited to a particular index in a database, such as the title index in Catalyst, for example. The search results in one's being placed in the index list at the point nearest to the terms searched for. One can scroll through the list from that point either forward or backward, as far as one wishes, through all the entries in the index, such as all the titles in Catalyst. In browse searching, the computer matches the search statement exactly, so word order is important.

BROWSER (WEB)

A software program which accesses, reads and displays information from the World Wide Web; also called 'web browser' or 'client.' e.g., Netscape, Internet Explorer, or Lynx (a text only browser).

CALL OR CATALOGUE NUMBER

An identification number assigned to a library collection item (e.g., book, periodical) which allows students to locate the item in the collection.

CITATION

Information which fully identifies a publication; a complete citation usually includes author, title, name of journal (if the citation is to an article) or publisher (if to a book), and date. Often pages, volumes and other information will be included in a citation.

CONFERENCE REPORT

Papers generated at or for a conference; may include minutes, transcripts, papers, and presentations.

DATABASE

An organized collection of information.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA

A compilation of individual articles by authorities giving a broad overview and background information. Articles typically include references to authoritative books and articles on a subject. General encyclopaedias cover all areas of knowledge; there are also specialized encyclopaedias that cover more limited subjects in greater depth.

FULLTEXT DATABASE

A database which includes the complete text of items (such as periodical articles) which are indexed in the database.

HOLDINGS

The materials owned by a library are sometimes referred to as its holdings.

HOME PAGE

The entry point or introductory page to a web site. It can also be a web page designed by an individual to present personal or professional information.

HYPertext

A document format which includes the use of specially coded, terms or images which, when selected or 'clicked', connect to a linked location or file, or carry out a command to run an application or program.

INDEX

A list of terms (such as subject headings or descriptors, author names or title words) describing journal articles, books, etc., and giving information needed to locate the articles, etc.

INTERNET

A world wide network of millions of computers.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER

An agency or company that assigns an internet address to individual users, enabling them to access the internet.

JOURNAL

A periodical containing scholarly articles written by authorities or experts in a given field of study.

KEYWORD

Any word or phrase associated with a record in a database that is indexed for searching.

KEYWORD SEARCHING

Keyword searching results in a list of database records that contain all the keywords entered as search terms, according to the logic of the search. A keyword search may be performed in one index, or it may be performed across more than one index.

MEDIA

Films, tapes and other audio-visual materials that require the use of special listening or viewing equipment.

MICROFORMS

publication format in which documents are produced in reduced size on transparent or opaque thin plastic. Microfilm is in reels, microfiche is on cards ('fiche' is a French word for 'card'), and microcards are opaque cards. Microform was a popular storage medium before there was digital storage, which allows much greater compression of data, but microform has never been popular with those who must use it to retrieve information.

MONOGRAPH

Mono = one, graph = writing, so a monograph is 'one writing', or a book on one subject.

PERIODICALS

tems published regularly at least twice a year. Daily and weekly newspapers, weekly news magazines, monthly hobby magazines, quarterly and semi-annual scholarly journals are common types of periodicals.

PERIODICAL INDEXES AND ABSTRACTS

Periodical indexes list articles which have appeared in journals, magazines, or newspapers. They list author, title, name of periodical, volume, pages and date of publication. Abstracts are indexes that also contain summaries of the article. (These summaries are also called abstracts.)

PRIMARY SOURCE

1. An account by an eyewitness or the first recorder of an event, in written or other form, including microform and electronic reproduction (e.g., diaries, letters, minutes of meetings, news footage, newspaper articles).
2. Data obtained from original research, statistical compilations or legal documents (e.g., reports of scientific experiments, USA Census records, public records).
3. Creative works such as poetry, music, or art.
4. Physical artifacts such as stone points, pottery, furniture, and buildings.

PUBLISHER

The entity (person, company, non-profit organization, or other group) that selects the content, produces, promotes, and distributes a book, periodical, or other item.

RECORD

A collection of related data, arranged in fields and treated as a unit. The data for each item in an electronic database makes up a record.

REFERENCE COLLECTION

Reference materials either provide specific information such as an address, a date, or a definition, or they have overview information on a subject, or they indicate sources for more information.

SERIES

Serial publications that have a common theme or subject, usually issued in the same format by the same publisher.

SERVER

A computer connected to others which is used to share (serve) file resources (web or network files or both) among the connected computers.

'Moving On':

section 4:

OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO USE THEM

section 1

STACK

Areas where large amounts of library material are shelved. One can speak of the reference stacks, the periodical stacks, the main book stacks, the documents stacks, etc.

section 2

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Words or phrases assigned to books and articles and used to index these items by topic. Subject headings are also called descriptors.

TERM

A word or a phrase, may be a subject heading, title, or name of a person or group.

section 3

TEXTBOOK

A book written specifically for an academic course, often containing valuable summary information on a topic.

section 4

THESAURUS

List of all the subject headings or descriptors used in a particular database, catalogue, or index, showing relationships among them.

section 5

TRUNCATION

Using a special symbol instead of the end of a word in an electronic search to retrieve all possible endings of that word. Sometimes truncation can be used within a word to retrieve variant spellings or at the beginning of a word to retrieve all prefixes.

section 6

section 7

section 8



WORKSHEET 4

USING THE LIBRARY

When using your university or college library, try and be methodical and structure your search for information on a topic by using these worksheets:

- To help you define your topic.
- To help with recording information about your search and findings.

Task 1 Library Log Search

STEP 1: Identify and Develop Your Research Topic

- State your topic as a question:
- Identify the main concepts or keywords in your question:
- Identify some synonyms and other related words:

STEP 2: Find General Information

With the keywords, synonyms and related words that you identified in Step 1, begin your search with printed or online encyclopaedias, and other reference sources, such as subject-specific handbooks and directories. As you read, identify additional keywords that are relevant to your interest. Search for further information using newly identified keywords, synonyms and related words. If you need help, check with a reference librarian or your tutor.

Below, list the titles and catalogue numbers of at least two encyclopaedias, handbooks, or other general information sources you consulted for your topic. You may also wish to summarise the useful information you found:

'Moving On':

section 4:

OTHER RESOURCES AT UNIVERSITY AND HOW TO USE THEM

section 1

section 2

section 3

section 4

section 5

section 6

section 7

section 8

STEP 3: Use the Library Catalogue to Find More

Using words relevant to your topic (identified in Steps 1 & 2 above), perform a Subject Search in the Catalogue. Print or write down the citation (author, title, etc.) catalogue number and location you wish to find in the library. Note the circulation status. When you pull the book from the shelf, review its bibliography for further potential sources.

Below, note information describing at least two books or other sources found in the Library Catalogue :

Task 2 Searching for books on your topic in the library catalogue

For each search use a similar format to this.

1. Record Your Search:

What kind of search did you use?

_____ **subject** _____ **keyword** _____ **both**

What terms did you use in your search? _____

For each book use a format like this.

2. Book Information:

Print out the catalogue record for each book, or record all of the following information below. You will need it when you are writing your bibliography or works cited list.

Author(s) or Editor(s): _____

Complete title: _____

Edition (if other than the first): _____

Place of publication: _____

Publisher: _____

Publication year: _____

Catalogue (call) number: _____

Location: _____

Note: the catalogue number and location will not be included on the bibliography page of the research paper, but they are needed for finding the book in the library.

3. When You Find The Book:

1. Look at the table of contents or index, the preface or first chapter, to be sure it will really help you with your project.
2. **Can't find it?** Remember: *Don't leave the library empty handed!* Talk to a library staff member or librarian about what to do next.