Literature Search Process

plan, identify, document...



Plan your literature search Identify key sources of information Document the search process

In order to provide an academic basis to your dissertation or final year project you will need to search through the published literature to identify relevant and up to date material. This guide aims to provide the basic steps to make the **literature search process** work more effectively.

Plan... your Research

Exploring and selecting from the vast amount of published information can be time-consuming, so it is important, before starting your research you **draw a plan** to ensure that you will make the best use of your time.

Decide on... your Topic

- Define your topic and think which keywords you can use to describe it.
- Think about all synonyms, related terms or alternative spellings.
- If the topic you have chosen is large you must decide to research a specific area or aspect.
- Set limits to search your topic (such as publication date & type, language, geographical or time scope)

TIP: Reading a general text or doing some browsing on the Internet can be a helpful way of clarifying your thoughts at this stage, and ensuring you focus on exactly what you want to research.

Find... information on your Topic

- Consult all the available "Help Guides" to see information on how to use the ILC and how to locate books and journals on a specific subject.
- Make a list of all the resources (printed and electronic) available at the ILC, for your topic.

- To locate up to date information sources find all the relevant to your topic "Electronic Resources".
- Check the subject links to resources on the Internet available on the "Subject Resources" and the "Selected Internet Resources" ILC Web pages.
- Locate the books held in the ILC, which include guidance on planning your research.
 These usually include tips on defining the scope of your project, suggest a range of materials you may need to consult, and describe principles of searching through resources.
 These books will be found in the ABEKT Library Catalogue under the subject "Research Methods".
- Make an appointment to see a member of the ILC staff who can help you in finding information for your topic and with selecting the right sources and the best search strategies.

TIPS:

Undergraduate dissertation? Use books (reference books, textbooks and research monographs), journal articles and academic websites.

Postgraduate research? Involve a wider range of sources, e.g. theses; conference proceedings; patents; e-prints; statistical sources; newspapers; government publications

Start... your Search

- Search thoroughly through each information source.
- Keep a correct and accurate **record** of the searches you conduct. The records should include the **keywords** you have used and the years of published information your research has covered.
- Keep a record of all the bibliographic references that are useful to your research. You
 should write down the references you locate in printed resources and download or print the
 ones found in electronic databases. A detailed record of everything useful you find will
 enable you to provide an accurate bibliography at the end of your project.

TIP: At this point you should become familiar with citation systems. You may use "Referencing Guides" available on the "Help Guides" ILC Web page to see how to cite printed and electronic resources or consult with your lecturer.

Obtain ... Copies

- If the database you are searching in is full text, you can download and print the full content of the bibliographic references related to your topic.
- When you are searching in bibliographic databases *(only abstracts available)* consult the ABKET Library Catalogue to check if the ILC holds the items you require.

• If not, they may be obtained via the **Interlibrary Request Service**.

Read... your Material

- To clarify what is actually relevant or not and what is up to date.
- Take notes while you are reading—you may need to quote.

Review... your Progress

Evaluate your results:

- Check whether you have selected the right kind of material.
- How relevant are the results? Is the author a well respected academic in their field?
- Usually you will find that you have too many results that are not really relevant. In this case you will want to refine your search to get more suitable articles.
- How recent are the results? Usually you will want to read the most recent publications.

Write... your Paper

- Keep in mind the deadlines.
- · Make a properly formatted bibliography.
- Avoid plagiarism.

For further help you may reach the Library Services Desk by email at: library@city.academic.gr, or anagnostopoulou@city.academic.gr, by phone: +30 2310 538560/961 or in person at the Information & Learning Commons (ILC), 6th floor, Leontos Sofou building.