Searching for material by subject
The research cycle

1. **Decide which sources to use** (e.g. databases, search engines etc.)
2. **Develop your search strategy** (search terms, combinations etc.)
3. **Review your search results**
4. **Amend your search strategy and / or choose different sources**
5. **Use the bibliography of relevant items to identify other useful papers and search terms**

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Searching by subject

An example:

Human rights of child asylum seekers
Searching by subject

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Human rights of child asylum seekers
Searching by subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Main concept</th>
<th>Concept 2</th>
<th>Main concept</th>
<th>Concept 3</th>
<th>Main concept</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asylum seekers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asylum seekers AND child AND human rights
Searching by subject

Synonyms for:

Asylum seekers

Child
Searching by subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Main concept</th>
<th>Alternative 1</th>
<th>Alternative 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asylum seekers</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 2</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Minor OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 3</td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Asylum seekers OR refugees) AND (child OR minor OR juvenile) AND human rights
Searching by subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>Main concept</th>
<th>Alternative 1</th>
<th>Alternative 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Asylum seeker*”</td>
<td>OR Refugee*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 2</td>
<td>Child*</td>
<td>OR Minor?</td>
<td>OR Juvenile*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 3</td>
<td>“Human rights”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(“Asylum seeker*” OR refugee*) AND (child* OR minor? OR juvenile*) AND “human rights”
My search string

(“Asylum seeker*” OR refugee*) AND (child* OR minor? OR juvenile*) AND “human rights”
My search string

"asylum seeker*" OR refugee*
And
child* OR minor? OR juvenile*
And
"human rights"
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LANGUAGE ACCESS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS IN BORDERLAND DETENTION CENTERS IN TEXAS</td>
<td>Wallace, Melissa; Hernandez, Carlos Ivan</td>
<td>REVISTA DE LLENGUA I DRET-JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LAW Issue: 68 Pages: 143-156 Published: DEC 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Do resettlement variables predict psychiatric treatment outcomes in a sample of asylum-seeking survivors of torture?</td>
<td>Whitsett, David; Sherman, Martin F.</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL PSYCHIATRY Volume: 63 Issue: 8 Pages: 674-685 Published: DEC 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Critical social work with unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people: Restoring hope, agency and meaning for the client and worker</td>
<td>Nelson, Deborah; Price, Elizabeth; Zubrzycki, Joanna</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK Volume: 60 Issue: 3 Pages: 601-613 Published: MAY 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The Mental Health of Children and Parents Detained on Christmas Island: Secondary Analysis of an Australian Human Rights Commission Data Set</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Build your own search string
Which sources to use?

Scholarly search engines (e.g. Google Scholar)

✅ Advantages?

❌ Disadvantages?
### Which sources to use?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOLARLY SEARCH ENGINES</th>
<th>BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES (ABSTRACTS/INDEXES)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e.g. Google Scholar and SOLO Articles or Search Everything</td>
<td>Often dedicated to a particular subject area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy search across tens of thousands of items</td>
<td>Search across <strong>key</strong> sources in the discipline - quality is assured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage unclear</td>
<td>Search brief details (author, article title, subject keywords, abstract)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality varies</td>
<td>Should return a smaller number of more relevant results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearly always returns too many results</td>
<td>Often include specialist search options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Especially good for articles, conference papers ... sometimes less good for books, policy documents, reports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Finding bibliographic databases

Databases A-Z
(https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php)
• A-Z listing all databases
• Choose Subject tab
Finding bibliographic databases

Look for database type “Abstracts/Indexes”
Subject searching for journal articles in SOLO

SOLO Articles or Search Everything great for searching for **specific items** – though it doesn’t include all articles available online or those only available in print.

Articles or Search Everything can be used for subject searching at undergraduate level...at postgraduate level use a bibliographic database.
Subject searching for books in SOLO

Index/Abstract services sometimes (but not always) cover books

SOLO is a **good source** for subject searching for **books**

Use your normal search strategy but remember books often cover more general topics than articles so you may need to use broader search terms.

NB. Make sure you are searching **Oxford Collections** and **NOT** Search Everything – otherwise you will get too many results!
Finding items from ‘one good record’

Once you have found relevant items – use details to find “subject headings”

You can then search using the subject heading OR browse the subject list on SOLO
Sciences / Medicine
- Scopus
- Web of Science
- Find a database using Databases A-Z

Social Science subjects
- Proquest
- Web of Science
- SOLO subject searching (for books)
- Find a database using Databases A-Z

Humanities subjects
- EBSCO
- SOLO subject searching (for books)
- Web of Science
- Find a database using Databases A-Z

History
- Historical Abstracts
- SOLO subject searching (for books)
- Web of Science
- Find a database using Databases A-Z

English Literature / Modern Languages and Literature / Linguistics
- MLA
- SOLO subject searching (for books)
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