On the road to a DPhil: Planning & managing the search process
Plan for today

✔ Starting the search process
  • What are the questions?
  • How to structure a search?
  • How to apply across multiple search tools?
  • How to use additional search methods?
✔ Managing references
✔ Keeping up-to-date
✔ Writing up the search methods
Background questions

? What are electronic cigarettes?
? How many adults in the UK use electronic cigarettes?
? Which companies market electronic cigarettes in the UK?
? How are electronic cigarettes regulated in the UK?
Background questions

- Textbooks
- Evidence summaries
- Organisational reports
- Government reports
- Statistical summaries
- Review articles
- Web searching
Background questions

- SOLO
- TRIPdatabase
- Organisational web-sites
- Governmental web-sites
- Google
- PubMed – limit to Reviews
Background questions

- Natural language searching

How are electronic cigarettes regulated in the UK?

- Simple keyword searching

“electronic cigarettes” regulation UK

Demonstration
Exercise 1
Can electronic cigarettes be used as an effective smoking cessation technique?
Can electronic cigarettes be used as an effective smoking cessation technique?
Can electronic cigarettes be used as an effective smoking cessation technique?
Exercise 2
Foreground questions

Moving from a PICOS to a search strategy

- Finding search terms
- Combining search terms
- Search tips
- Subject searching
## Search terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smoker</th>
<th>Electronic cigarettes</th>
<th>Cessation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smokers</td>
<td>E-cigarettes</td>
<td>Stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>E-cigs</td>
<td>Quit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco use</td>
<td>Vaping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cigarette use</td>
<td>Blucigs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicotine dependence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Combining search terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AND</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>NOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smoking AND cessation</td>
<td>Smoking OR tobacco use</td>
<td>Smoking NOT cannabis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrows</td>
<td>Broadens</td>
<td>Excludes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Search tips

Truncation & wildcards
  e.g. smok*

“Phrase searching”
  e.g. “tobacco use”

Nesting
  e.g. (smok* OR “tobacco use”)
  AND (cessation OR quit* OR stop*)

Limits
  e.g. date, language
Subject searching

On Medline, search using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)

- Articles are tagged with keywords from a structured vocabulary
- A search for these keywords retrieves articles on the topic

Equivalent subject / thesaurus searching available on many databases
Limits

You can use the database limits to focus your searches. Common limits include:

- Date, language and article type

On some databases you might also be able to limit by:

- Study type, age, gender and species
Final search

1. Smoking Cessation/
2. (smok* OR “tobacco use” OR “nicotine dependence”) AND (cessation OR quit* OR stop*)
3. 1 OR 2
4. Electronic cigarettes/
5. Electronic cigarette* OR e-cig* OR vaping OR blucigs
6. 4 OR 5
7. 3 AND 6
8. Limit 7 to systematic reviews
Choosing a search tool

Bibliographic databases
• Medline, Embase, Web of Science...

Full-text databases
• EuropePMC, GoogleScholar...

Subject web-sites
• NICE Evidence, TRIP...

Full list on OxLIP+ [http://oxlip-plus.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/](http://oxlip-plus.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/) - Subject – Medical Science
Demonstration

Run the search
Exercise 4
Additional searches

- Grey literature
- Citation tracking
  - Backward
  - Forward
- Sibling studies
- Related articles
- Identify key authors & organizations
Grey literature

✓ Conference abstracts
✓ Theses
✓ Government documents & organisational reports
✓ Ongoing studies
Forward citations

Linking to papers that have cited a relevant paper

✓ Web of Science
✓ Scopus
✓ Google Scholar
Backward citations

Linking to papers that have been cited by a relevant paper

✓ Web of Science
✓ Scopus
✓ GoogleScholar
Sibling studies

Linking to papers that were part of the same project e.g. cost-effectiveness & related RCT...

✓ Author linking
✓ Common study ID
Related articles

Linking to papers that are similar to a relevant paper

✓ PubMed
✓ Scopus
✓ Google Scholar

Use similar articles or related articles links
Exercise 5
Managing your References

✔ Reference management software allows you to:
  ✔ Store & organise references
  ✔ Insert references in documents & generate bibliographies

✔ Software options
  ✔ Endnote, Mendeley, RefWorks, Zotero...
Keeping up-to-date

You will want to keep up to date with developments in your field over the course of your DPhil. To manage this you could set up:

✓ E-mail alerts
✓ RSS feeds
✓ Journal TOCs
✓ Twitter feeds
Writing up the search

✔ Short paragraph in the text
  • Summary of keywords
  • Sources searched
  • Date of search
  • Overview of additional search methods

✔ Appendix:
  • Full version of search from at least 1 of the databases
Questions