Beyond books & articles

FINDING THESES & CONFERENCE PAPERS
Finding dissertations & theses

Why are theses and dissertations useful?
Finding Oxford theses and dissertations
Finding theses and dissertations from other institutions
# Dissertation or thesis – what’s the difference?

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>DISSERTATION</strong></th>
<th><strong>THESIS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>An extended scholarly essay, usu. based upon original research, submitted for a degree</td>
<td>A dissertation to maintain and prove a [proposition]; esp. one written or delivered by a candidate for a University degree.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Usually refers to Masters’ programmes</em></td>
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Why theses?

**Relevance** of original, up-to-date research

Use as a *springboard* to scope existing literature

Provides *inspiration* of ‘the finished product’

**Discovery** of ideas outside a topic’s consensus

See the *evolution* of an author’s ideas over time
Finding theses in Oxford

PRINT

Search via SOLO for theses from mid 1970s onwards
Ask your subject librarian about earlier theses or if you can’t find a thesis
Ability to search for theses by supervisors or department

DIGITAL

Some theses available digitally in the Oxford Research Archive
ora.ox.ac.uk
Higher degree students registered since 1 Jan 2007 must deposit a digital copy, though some retrospective conversion
Search via SOLO
Finding theses on SOLO

To find a specific thesis:
◦ Use author surname/keywords from title

To browse theses supervised by a specific academic:
◦ Use supervisor’s name as search term

To browse theses by department:
◦ Use department name as search term
◦ Beware of name changes!

To search by thesis type:
◦ Use “D.Phil” or “M.Phil” as search terms
◦ Typing Dphil or Mphil brings back fewer results

Use Advanced Search and select “Theses” as Resource Type
Where are Oxford theses kept?

Science theses (D.Phil and M.Sc), 1976-

**Radcliffe Science Library**

Law theses

**Bodleian Law Library**

Theses on the United States

**Vere Harmsworth Library**

M.Sc theses in Criminology, Economics, International Development, Sociology, Social Policy & Intervention

**Social Science Library**

Everything else: **Bodleian Library**

Including

- Non-science D.Phil theses 1917-
- M.Litt/B.Litt
- M.Phil 1977-
- B.Phil and B.D.

Order by stack request to the **Weston Library**
Finding theses from other institutions

ProQuest Dissertations & Theses

For more databases: 
https://libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/az.php

Databases A-Z + Choose subject > Theses and dissertations

eThOS (ethos.bl.uk)

Databases A-Z: Theses and Dissertations
Find the best library databases for your research.

20 Databases found for Theses and Dissertations
ProQuest Theses & Dissertations

Mostly North American and UK content

3.8 million dissertations & theses indexed

Over 1.7 million theses with full text availability (mainly US)
EThOS

Service for UK theses via the British Library

Many available for free download (account must be created)

Some theses unavailable or require digitisation
Other options for finding full text theses

Check the research repository for the awarding institution via OpenDOAR (http://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/opendoar/)

Ask your Reader Services about inter-library loan – but most universities won’t lend theses

Arrange to visit the awarding university to read the thesis – contact the library first!

Contact the author
Finding conference papers

Why conference papers and proceedings are important for research

Why they can be tricky to find

How you can access conference papers and proceedings through SOLO and online
Conference proceedings

“A conference proceeding is the published record of a meeting sponsored by a society or association, usually but not necessarily including abstracts or reports of papers presented by the participants.

The term is also used in the titles of journals published by long-established scholarly societies, for example, the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America.”

Source: http://subjectguides.uwaterloo.ca/content.php?pid=108720&sid=817883
Why are conference papers important for research?

Discovering the latest research
- Results of research made available before formal publication in a journal

Maintain awareness of developments in your field

Find the ‘journey’ of the research
- See how research has been shaped from conference to journal article
Why are they difficult to find?

- Delays in publication
- Varying publication formats
- Varying names, e.g., colloquium, symposium, workshop
- Acronyms or abbreviations may feature in the name
- Papers only available as pre-print or abstract
- Some proceedings never published
Finding conference papers - online

Many conference papers are free online on Open Access archives such as ORA (Oxford University Research Archive), or on the host society’s web pages.

A quick search for the paper’s title in Google/Google Scholar will often find it:
Finding conference papers - SOLO

Search for the title of the conference in SOLO (All libraries/collections).

If you don’t have the full title, try some keywords, such as:
- Organisation name
- Editor’s name
- Location of conference
- Date of Conference
Finding conference papers - SOLO

TIP: For more general searches, use ‘Congresses’ as a subject term in the ‘Advanced Search’ settings on SOLO.
Finding conference papers – print elsewhere

If the conference proceedings are not available in Oxford or online, try searching other libraries via:

- COPAC (UK research libraries) [www.copac.ac.uk](http://www.copac.ac.uk)
- British Library [explore.bl.uk](http://explore.bl.uk)
- WorldCat [www.worldcat.org](http://www.worldcat.org)

And request an inter-library loan [www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/using/ill](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/using/ill)
Finding conference papers – databases

Most bibliographic databases will include records of conference papers and proceedings.

Find subject-relevant databases via Databases A-Z or via your subject LibGuide.

Many databases allow you to limit results via conference.

Also try grey literature resources such as OpenGrey: www.opengrey.eu/
Finding conference papers – databases via Databases A-Z

There are a number of tools and databases which specifically search for conference proceedings and papers:

- **Conference Papers Index** – part of ProQuest; scientific coverage
- **IEEE Conference Proceedings** – physics, engineering, material science and computer science
- **Conference Proceedings Citation Index** – search as part of Web of Science
- **PapersFirst** and **ProceedingsFirst** – available via OCLC FirstSearch
- **Zetoc** – British Library’s table of contents service
Conference Proceedings Citation Index

Part of Web of Science Core Collection – access via Databases A-Z

Two indexes:
- Science & Technology Proceedings
- Social Sciences & Humanities Proceedings

Coverage 1990- present
Zetoc

Searches through British Library electronic tables of contents for journals and conference proceedings

Coverage 1993- present

Includes an email alerting service for articles and papers

http://zetoc.jisc.ac.uk/

- Zetoc Search > conference search
In summary

Many papers are freely available online – search Google Scholar

Many general or subject indexing databases allow you to search for conference proceedings

There are databases specifically for conference proceedings

Use the inter-library loan service for printed items not held in Oxford

Your subject librarian is always ready to help – [www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/subjects/librarians](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/subjects-and-libraries/subjects/librarians)
Credits

Searching for material by subject – Angela Carritt

Theses & Dissertations – Kate Beeby, Helen Worrell

Conference papers - Kate Beeby, Craig Finlay, with substantial thanks to Sue Bird and the librarians of the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada
  ◦ Waterloo libguide:  

Slides will be available from libguides.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/workshops