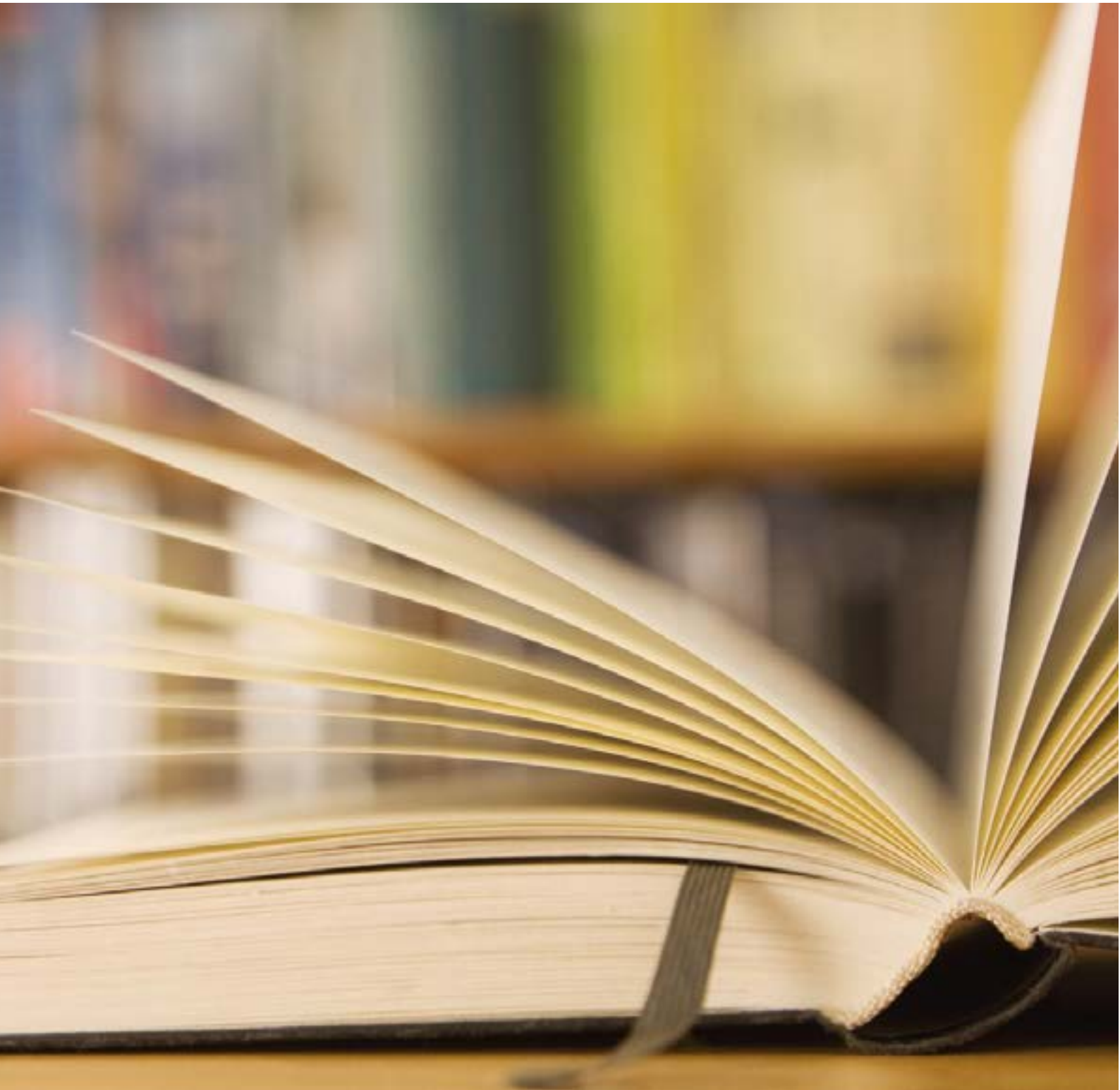


An LRC Guide **Research**



All the information contained in this booklet has been collected from the Study Skills website, resources and team. Please visit the Study Skills website for more in-depth information.

How to Research like a Pro

To get the best marks for an assignment you need to demonstrate your breadth of knowledge and understanding of the topic. The best way to do this is to research, READ and reference a variety of sources in your work. But where do you start? How do you find academic articles? How do you make sure the information you find is genuine? How do you REFERENCE?!

Don't panic, read on...

Don't just rely on the internet

The internet is a great source of information and can be used to gain a basic understanding of your topic/subject, however you shouldn't rely solely on this.



1. ANYONE can write ANYTHING on the internet so the information may not be accurate or reliable!
2. You want to show the breadth of your knowledge which requires you to use a variety of sources – so put some effort in!
3. Looking through a variety of sources will allow you to verify information by cross referencing facts and theories and will build your argument's credibility.
4. The really good resources are not necessarily available on Google as they want you to pay for them!

Good Resources vs Bad Resources

Good academic resources have been peer reviewed and scrutinised by experts in the field. These include:

- Books
- Academic Journals and magazines
- Government sites
- Google Scholar
- Academic Libraries and databases
- Newspapers

It can be argued that there are no 'bad' resources but you should be careful about using the following in an assignment as **some** are subject to bias and/or may not be accurate:

- Blogs
- YouTube videos
- Online encyclopedias e.g. Wikipedia
- Basic Google – it's not specific enough
- Tabloid papers – opinions, rarely facts!
- Articles without citations

The LRC can help you!

As students of Barnsley College and the LRC, you have access to a variety of FREE, easy to use research tools to help you on your researching journey.

Heritage



The library catalogue is called Heritage. You can use this to search for books, reserve them or manage your library account from home.

Simply type in your key word, author name or book title to find the location of the book on the shelves.

OpenAthens



Open Athens is the online database for our electronic books, journals and art/music archives. It can be accessed both on and off campus 24/7. It will ask you to log on. Simply type in 'Barnsley College' in the institution search bar and it will direct you to the College authentication page.

Discovery



Discovery searches ALL of our resources (Heritage, Athens and Google Scholar) through ONE interface. It is easy to use, and you can customize your search results to suit your preferences.

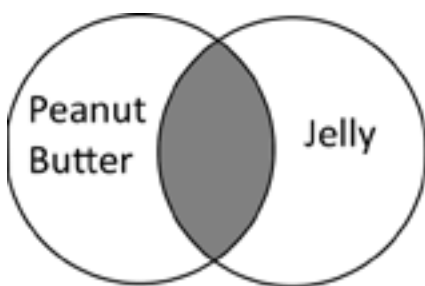
Key researching tips

Keywords

- Identify and make a list of the keywords in the question/topic you are researching
- Use a thesaurus to find alternatives to those words – this will widen your search possibilities
- Use an * at the end of your keyword to get the database to search for synonyms of the word e.g. clos* will search for 'close', 'closing', 'closed', 'closure' etc.
- "" around a phrase will tell the database to search for results with the phrase as a whole, rather than the individual words.

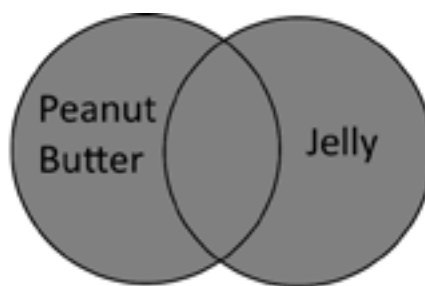
Boolean Machine

Use **OR**, **AND** and **NOT** with your keywords while searching to filter the results for what you are looking for. The aim is to find fewer, more accurate results which will be more relevant to your topic.



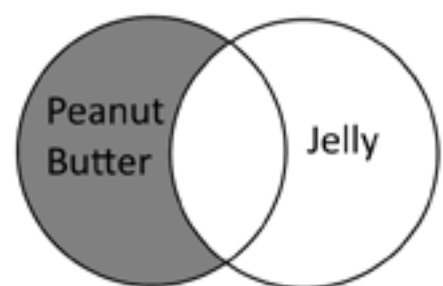
AND

Using AND, this search would only retrieve results with Peanut Butter and Jelly.



OR

Using OR, this search would retrieve results with peanut butter, with jelly, and with both.



NOT

Using NOT, this search would retrieve results with peanut butter, and exclude those with jelly or PB with jelly.

Refining your search



Check the menus of your database - can you refine your search? Often you can narrow the results you receive by using a filter:

- Source type - academic journal, magazine, book etc
- Subject
- Publisher
- Location
- Publication date
- Language

Evaluate your results

Is your result:

Currency

- When was the information published or posted?
- Has it been revised or updated?
- Is the information/link current or out of date?

Relevance

- Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?

Authority

- Who is the author/publisher/source?
- Are the author's organizational affiliations given?
- What are the author's qualifications to write about the topic?

Accuracy

- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Can you verify the information in another source?

Purpose

- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Can you verify the information in another source?

(California State University)

Searching summary

1.

Start general and refine your sources and searches as your understanding of the topic deepens.

2.

When it comes to online searching, it is all about the search terms you use and how you use them. Computers have vast memories, but you need to do the thinking for them!

3.

Don't trust everything you find. Use the CRAAP test.

4.

Use a wide selection of resources to validate your findings. Don't just stick to one method, the more, the better to show how well read you are!

5.

If you don't find what you need, ask a librarian.

Referencing

It is REALLY important to reference in your academic work. Why?

1. To enable someone to find the sources you have consulted and referred to
2. To demonstrate the breadth of your research, reading and knowledge
3. To support your argument with authoritative sources
4. To avoid accusations of plagiarism (using somebody else's work without acknowledging the fact)

It is good practice to collect references of the information as you research because even if you do not cite all of it in your work, it has contributed to your understanding of the topic and you can use these in your Bibliography. Also, it will make your life easier when you want to find something again!

Always take note of:

Who	Author(s), Editor(s), Organisation
When	Date of the work – when was it published?
What	Title of the work
Where	Place of publication, Publisher, Page numbers, website URL

Reference list

This is a list of all the sources that you have cited in your work

Bibliography

This list contains your references used and other sources that you may have read but not cited in the work

The referencing style and format you need to use (APA 6th, Harvard etc.) will depend on your **course requirements** but the majority will ask for the information above. Below are examples of referencing using BC Harvard - notice the use of punctuation and italics.

Examples

Book:

Surname, Initials. (Year). *Title of book: Subtitle* (edition if not 1st ed.).Place of publication: Publisher.

Smith, G. (2002). *Journalism law: A brief introduction*. Oxford: Hart.

Journal:

Surname, Initials. (Year). Article title: Subtitle. *Journal Title*, volume (issue number), page number(s).

Stadler, J. (2000). Exotic plant species invade diversity hot spots: The alien flora of Kenya. *Ecography*, 23(2), 169-176.

Website:

Surname, Initials. (Year). *Title of website*. Retrieved from URL

Benn, T. (2002). *Recognition in a democracy*. Retrieved from <http://www.tonybenn.com/reco.html>

In text referencing

Whenever you refer to someone else's work or opinion in the body of your work, you need to cite the author surname(s), year of publication and page number(s) of the work you are referring to.

For example:

Workers in teams tend to adopt particular roles (Belbin, 1996; Smith and Jones, 2014, pp.12-15).

or:

In his book on teamwork, Belbin (1996) outlines nine roles which...

Easy right?

Further help

The LRC Study Skills team have compiled an easy to follow website featuring printable guides and helpful how to videos for you to access 24/7:

<https://www.barnsley.ac.uk/shops-services/higher-education-library/study-skills/referencing-and-bibliographies/>

Should you need further assistance, the Study Skills team, Cherie and Helen offer 1-2-1 appointments and drop in referencing workshops:

Email: studyskills@barnsley.ac.uk