Introduction to DMU Library Databases

This guide will introduce you to the basics of searching a database, which is the easiest way to locate academic journal articles by topic.

You can find useful databases for your subject area via the Subject Guides on the Library homepage at www.library.dmu.ac.uk. The guide is illustrated using examples from Academic Search Premier, a database with broad coverage across academic subject areas. Some databases will be based on EBSCO, the same platform as Academic Search Premier, and will look similar. Others will have slightly different interfaces, but similar functions are usually available.

Start at www.library.dmu.ac.uk.

Select Subject Guides, then find your subject, then go to the Journal Articles tab. Choose a database from the list.

Academic Search Premier is a good general choice if you can’t decide where to start.

You will be asked to log on using your Single Sign On. This is the same username and password you use to login to your email, Blackboard and myDMU.

If you are off-campus you may be taken to the database’s own login screen. Look for a link to Institutional login, Alternative login or Shibboleth login. Choose this, and search for and select De Montfort to bring up the Single Sign On page.

You should now find yourself at the database’s search page. Some databases offer a lot of search options, others just have a single search box.

Choose some keywords which describe your search topic. It is usually a good idea to start with a few simple words which describe the main topic you are interested in. Run your search.
Check the **number of results** you have found. If you have found a lot of articles, you can afford to **add keywords** and search for something more specific.

If you have found few (or no) results, try **fewer keywords** or searching for a more general topic.

If you still cannot find anything, you may need to **change your keywords**, or try a different database.

Most databases offer further options to narrow down your results. Useful ones may include:

- **Scholarly or peer reviewed** journals: these feature good quality academic content
- **Dates** (note that papers may not be published until a year or more after an event)
- **Locations**: allowing you to focus on UK issues

These options are usually listed beside your search results.

To access an article you will need to check if the Library has subscribed to this content on your behalf.

- Any article marked **full-text** or **pdf** will usually be available straight away within the database.
- Otherwise **Find it @DMU** can check if the full-text is subscribed to elsewhere.

**Find it @DMU** will bring up a pop-up with further information about the article. There are a number of possible outcomes from clicking this option:

- Access may be available through a single supplier. Check the text to see if access is available **off-campus**. Click the red Go button to get through to the article.
- Access may be available through multiple suppliers. Check the text to see which option(s) make access available **off-campus**. Click the relevant red Go button to get through to the article.
- The screen may display **Sorry, no full text is available for this item**. DMU does not subscribe to this article online.

Where full-text is not available online, you can check to see if the Library subscribes to the paper version of the relevant journal. If not, and the article is particularly important to a dissertation or paper, you may be able to request an inter-library loan of the article. Please ask for further details.

*Help guide produced by Katie Fraser, PhD kfraser@dmu.ac.uk. Updated September 2012. Any issues with databases or journals should be reported to the Just Ask service justask@dmu.ac.uk*