**How to effectively search the Databases:** The principles of literature searching are essentially the same on all databases, though they may look slightly different.

The examples given in this section are using Art Full text which is an Ebsco based platform.

The principles remain the same regardless of databases you may use, even though there may be some superficial differences in their presentation.

To make the most of the Advanced Search you should use a range of search tools which will help you expand the scope of your search or define it more accurately. The aim of this is to produce quality rather than quantity in your results.

Each database will list the full range of search tools it offers and how to use them (look on the database’s Help pages). Here are some of the most commonly used:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Use...</th>
<th>To...</th>
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<tr>
<td>* or $ (depending on the database)</td>
<td>Truncate. This expands a search term to include forms of a root word e.g. author* retrieves authors, authorship etc. (But note that it may also retrieve authority and authorise.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>*</td>
<td>Find unlimited number of characters within a word. For example encyclo<em>dia retrieves encyclopaedia and encyclopedia or coil</em>r retrieves colour and color.</td>
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<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Finds alternative spellings. The ? represents any single character; ?? represents two characters and so on. Use this within or at the end of a word. For example Wom??n finds woman as well as women, and theat??r finds records containing theatre or theater.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td>Narrow the search and retrieve records containing <strong>all</strong> of the words it separates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Broadens the search and retrieves records containing <strong>any</strong> of the words it separates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOT</td>
<td>This is a narrow search method, which retrieves records that do not contain the word or term following it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>( )</td>
<td>This groups words when combining phrases and to show the order in which the relationship should be considered, e.g. (pink or white) and (mouse or mice).</td>
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Here are some examples of how search tools might be used in a search on the subject of 20th Century women architects using Arts Full text.
If you open the search out, replacing the ‘e’ in women with a ‘?’, the database will then search women or Woman.

By using the asterisk at the end of architecture (commonly known as wild card) also opens your search out. The wild card basically searches all the alternative stem endings of a word, so in this instance the database will now return results that include the terms in both singular and plural versions, but also architectural etc. Therefore be very careful where you place the asterisk.

In this instance by simply opening the options out for both singular and plural the results increase from 37 to 81 results.

Looking to refine your search to enable more relevant results is quite simple. Looking at current key words we have place Wom?n and architect* in two separate boxes treating them as separate ideas so the results are as likely to yield articles about wom?n’s opinions about architects as they are about Wom?n architectures themselves.

By putting the two keywords in the same box you are saying that they are one idea and therefore the database should look for these two words appearing next to each other. The results have now been reduced from 81 to 30 results and should be closer to what you are looking for.

If you want to exclude a specific subject from your search you can use the NOT command.

Other ways you can refine or be more precise in your search is to change where your keywords are looking. The default is anywhere. So rather than looking anywhere in the record for these terms you look specifically in the title: Or another way is to be specific about which journal you wish to do your key word searching.

The important thing is do not be afraid to modify your keywords and compare the different results that yield. Remember though have a plan and be clear about what you are looking for before you start searching otherwise as with everything else, ‘rubbish in is rubbish out!’
Found articles what next? Much of what you will find will either be available online or in the library in paper format. However some we will not have a subscription for so you need to consider Inter Library Loans.

Inter Library Loans (ILLS) are materials obtained from other libraries. The ILL service can be used when Plymouth University does not subscribe to a journal title, as well as books, chapters and conference proceedings.

The ILL Service obtains materials from other libraries and whilst it will provide many items, it cannot guarantee to supply every item. You will be kept informed on the progress of your requests.

Journals articles, chapters and conference papers are usually delivered electronically via email whereas books are delivered as physical items. Some of these physical items may have conditions attached to them by the supplying library such as "For Library use Only" and Plymouth University Library will need to adhere to these conditions.

Researchers are welcome to use the ILL service, ILL requests are free and there are no limits on request numbers within sensible and appropriate use. The service does cost the Library about £15 a request so this should be considered when placing requests. If a book is to be used for an extended period of time or if others may wish to read it, it might be more practical to discuss the purchase with the relevant subject information specialist.

There are charges for renewal and non-collection of physical items.

Make an ILL Request

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· Go to the Primo library catalogue

· Click the ILL Requests link (top right corner below ‘Sign in’ and ‘My Account’).

· Select the appropriate request type and fill out the form as directed.

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If you are concerned/have questions about your request, contact the Inter Library Loans team at illply@plymouth.ac.uk.