# Using the Web of Science database
## Information Skills Practical Workshop

This worksheet will give you a taster of the information available to you via Web of Science. Literature searching from the website of any database is more powerful than searching via Primo or with Google Scholar.

## Please ask for help at any time if you need it



## 1: Plan your search – Web of Science search rules

Use the **Search Strategy** planning grid included in your pack to help you to decide on the keyword search approach you will use in this database. Remember to apply the search rules for Web of Science (WoS).

**Search rules for Web of Science:**

- Main Boolean operators: **AND, OR, NOT**
- Exact phrase in quotation marks e.g. **"passive smoking"**
- Truncation symbol ***** e.g. **smok*** will find smoke, smoker, smokers, smoking
- Can use ***** in an exact phrase search

## 2: Carry out your initial search in Web of Science

1. Go to **Primo** at **http://primo.abdn.ac.uk** and sign in at the top right-hand side of the screen
2. Select **Find Databases** which is above the search boxes
3. Enter Web of Science into the **Database Search** box at the top of the screen and click on the search button. Primo will return one result. Click on the name – Web of Science (Clarivate). This opens the database's details page in Primo. In the **View Online** section, click on Web of Science (Clarivate). You may be asked to provide your username and password
4. Click on the purple **Access now** button
5. You can select specific databases from within Web of Science when conducting searches. For now, leave the search option as **Web of Science Core Collection**
6. Let's try a "quick and dirty" search using only one of your words/phrases for each of your ideas. Don't use any truncation symbols at this point – you will use them later to see if they make a difference!
   a) Click on **+Add row** under the search box to give you two search boxes to use
   b) Make sure the search field box is set to **Topic** for both search boxes
   c) Type one keyword or phrase for your first concept (idea) into the first search box
      Type one keyword or phrase for your second concept (idea) into the second search box
7. Click on **Search**

8. Look at the results. How many records have been found?

9. Now improve your search – go back and look at the search terms you thought about on your planning sheet/matrix. Use more of your alternative words/phrases for each idea and make sure that you apply the truncation symbol at appropriate points

10. Click on **Search**

11. Look at the results. How many records have been found?

**You will use a combination of the options presented in Section 3 (View and evaluate your results) and Section 4 (Refine your search) to improve the records that you find.**

## 3: View and evaluate your results

You never get the perfect search first time and you will modify and refine your search as you go along. This involves looking at what you have found and modifying, refining and improving your search strategy.

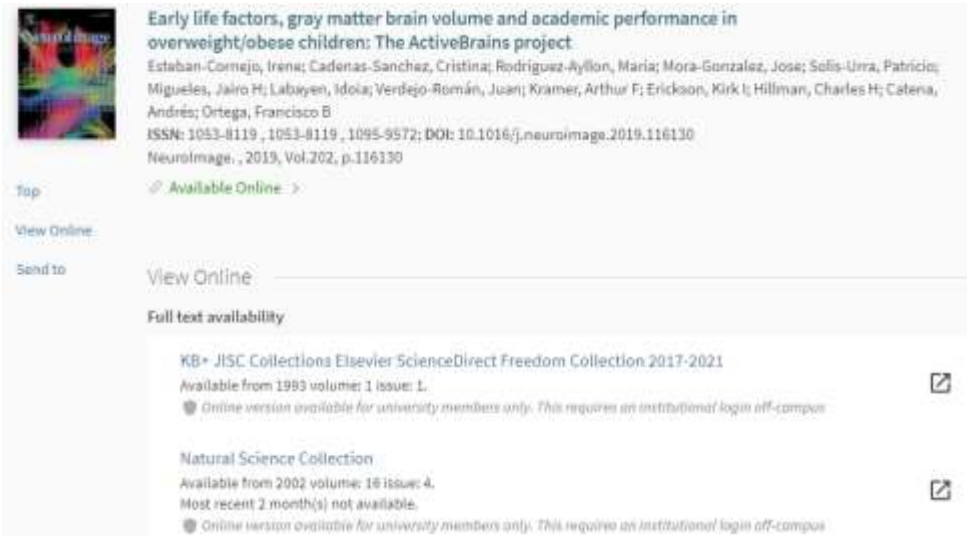
1. **Viewing your results**: there are a number of options available to you

   a) Click on **View Abstract**. This presents you with more information about the resource

   b) Click on the blue title link for any of the papers. Skim down the information given in this display. Are there any other keywords that you could use to improve your search? If there are, note them down as you may want to use them at a later stage of your search

   c) Click on the **Find It** button for any papers of interest


This will link you back to Primo and the details page for the item you selected. **Available Online** means that we have full-text access to a paper. Where Primo displays **Check holdings** it means that we may have the document in physical format.



Where we have online access to a document, click on the name of the provider, e.g. ScienceDirect. Primo will open their website in a new tab.

**Note**: There will be instances where we don't have access to a document in physical or electronic format.

**Additional note**: For oil/gas/petroleum engineers and geologists: Society of Petroleum Engineers, Offshore Technology Conference and related papers are available in full text through the OnePetro database. OnePetro does not allow access to their data through Web of Science. If you find SPE and related papers in databases such as Web of Science, you will need to perform a search within OnePetro for these documents.

2. **Displaying/sorting your results**: the default setting in the **Sort by** box (above your results list) is with the most recent item at the top of your results list and the oldest item at the bottom (**Publication Date – newest to oldest**). You can change this sort order to assist your evaluation of what you have found

   a) Change the **Sort by** option to **Relevance**: this sorts the results list based on where your search terms appear within the reference

   b) Change the **Sort by** option to **Times Cited: highest to lowest**. This sorts the list so that the paper with the highest number of citations appears at the top. This is likely to be an older paper, but not necessarily the oldest paper

3. **Evaluating your results**: this depends on your own knowledge of the topic. Skim read the results and abstracts as appropriate. Look for: relevant words in the title and in the abstract; recognised/known authors or institutions. Consider the references used and the number of times a paper has been cited since publication (does not apply if it is a recent paper!). Think about whether the journal in which the paper was published is an important one in this subject area.

## 4: Refine your search

You never get the perfect search first time. You have to modify and refine as you go along. There are different ways in which you can do this. The following options are available, and you will use a combination of these as you evaluate your results and develop your search strategy to identify relevant papers.

1. Refining by **keyword**: To the left of your document results you can add another set of keywords to the **Search within results for** box – e.g. a third idea/concept
   In the **Search within results for** box add another keyword(s) if necessary. Click on **Search**. How many records are found?

You can continue to use this option to add more and more ideas. It carries out an automatic **AND** search within the previous set of results.

2. Refining by **Web of Science Categories:** To the left of your results list**,** the database presents additional options for refining and limiting your search. Click the box next to the relevant category and select **Refine**. You will then be presented with a refined list of results.
3. **Research Areas** (under **View all options**): Here you will find more specific options for refining your search by subjects. Select **more options/values** to see all the Research Areas from which you can choose. You will then see a selection of check boxes relating to all the Research Areas contained within your results list. Select the Research Areas you are interested in and then click **Refine**. Alternatively, you can **Exclude** Research Areas you are not interested in. You will then be presented with a refined list of results.
4. Refining by **Document Types**: To the left of your results list, the database presents additional options for refining and limiting your search.

   Skim down the sections looking for **Document Type** and open this if it is not yet open. There are many document types available through WoS. Select **more options/values** to see all the document types from which you can choose.

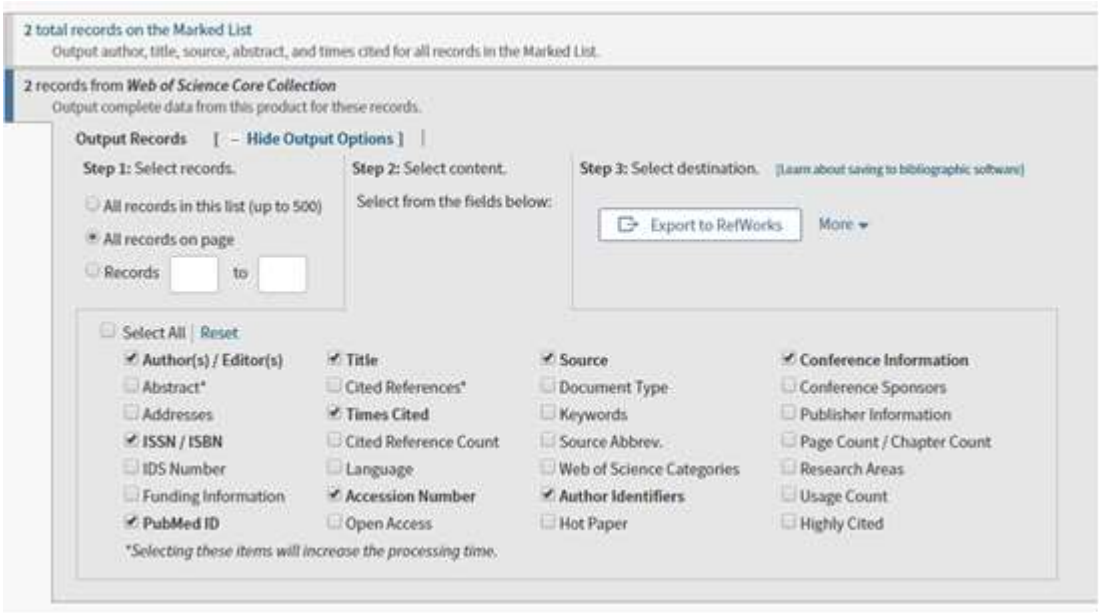
If you have the option to limit by **Review**, use this (can be extremely useful in the early part of a literature review). Put a tick against the document types you are interested and click **Refine**. You will then be presented with a refined list of results.

5. Refining by other means: in the default setting of the **Refine Results** listing WoS allows you to refine/limit your results by a variety of means including **Source Title** (name of the journal in which papers were published), **Author**, **Publication Year**. Do any of these options provide you with useful results?

## 5: Output your results

Almost all databases allow you to mark and output your search results in a variety of ways. In WoS the best method is to create a list of marked records and then choose to either Print, Email, Save or Export that marked list to RefWorks.

1. **Creating your Marked List**:
   a) Click in the check box to the left of each record in which you are interested
   b) Once you have selected all relevant records on one page of your results scroll to the top of the results list and click **Add to Marked List**. Continue through all of your pages of results adding relevant records to your Marked List
   c) Once all relevant records have been selected, click **Marked List** in the top right-hand corner of the screen. You should see the number of records you have selected next to the Marked List option
2. **Exporting your Marked List**: Selecting Marked List will open the following screen




Complete the three steps:

1. Select records
2. Select Content e.g. the fields contained in the records exported
3. Select destination e.g. **Print**, **Email** or **RefWorks**. You will be presented with different pop-up boxes depending on which destination you select

If you have sent records to RefWorks, you will then be directed to log in to your RefWorks account.

## 6: Advanced features

Many databases allow you to set up time saving features such as personal profiles (or accounts), saved search strategies or results lists and alerting features.

To create a personal account in Web of Science:

1. Go to http://wok.mimas.ac.uk (Note there is no www section in the URL)
2. Click on the button **Access now**
3. Click on **Sign In** on the top bar of the WoS screen
4. Click on **Register** and complete the required steps
5. You've now set up your own personal account in WoS, and can save search strategies, set up alerts and manage your settings
6. Further information on these features, and others, can be found in the WoS Help pages. To access these, click on **Help** in the top right-hand corner of any WoS screen

## 7: How to access Web of Science

### On-Campus Access

All university computers have been set-up so that you only need your university username and password to access most of our electronic resources.

1. Select Web of Science from the **Find Databases** function in Primo
2. You will be taken through Shibboleth, a service used by many universities for accessing databases
3. You may need to select the location of this university (UK) and then scroll down to select University of Aberdeen
4. Enter your university username and password to access the resource

When using your own devices on-campus you will need to configure them to access our wireless network. Once you have connected to our wireless network you will link out to electronic resources in the same way as above. More information can be found at www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qgdbs005.pdf

### Off-Campus Access

When off-campus, most of our electronic resources are still accessible via the Shibboleth log-in route, requiring only your username and password. **Web of Science is still accessible in this way from off-campus**. You can also access electronic resources from off campus through the University's Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI).
Details on doing this are available at: www.abdn.ac.uk/toolkit/documents/uploads/remote-access-vdi.pdf
More detailed library guidance on accessing electronic resources is available at:
www.abdn.ac.uk/library/documents/guides/qgdbs005.pdf

## 8: Help and advice

| **Library staff and Information Consultants can help with any difficulties using any library resource** |
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| Information Consultant contact details: http://bit.ly/InfoConsultants |
| **IT staff are able to help with specific IT related problems you may be having** |
| **IT Service Desk -** Log any IT problems at https://myit.abdn.ac.uk<br><br>Tel. 01224 273636 (24-hour service available) |