Introduction to research skills for Psychology

The library has a range of print and electronic resources that you will find useful. Learning how to use these resources effectively will save you a great deal of time and effort.

The subject guide handouts available at the Information Desk (also available to off campus learners by emailing the staff at the end of this document) are a good starting point. There are also useful guides to resources at: http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/subjects/

Finding books and journals in the library catalogue
The catalogue gives you online access to details of books and journals held by the Monash University Library at: http://library.monash.edu.au/

The best way to find a journal is to use the Advanced Search and journal title option. A guide to using the catalogue is available at the Information Desk and on request.

Finding academic/refereed journal articles
For your studies/research you will need to find quality articles from academic/professional/refereed journals. These are available in print (check our holdings in the library catalogue) and online via our databases page at: http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/databases/

What is an academic/refereed article?
In general terms, such articles:

- Have an abstract and reference list or bibliography of material cited that may exceed half a page
- Have an author/authors with academic qualifications and affiliations
- Are substantial, usually more than 8-10 pages long
- Have academic or scholarly content and are written using technical language
- Are divided into sections such as introduction, methodology, results, conclusion, reference list
- Appear in a publication that is published by a reputable academic or professional institution or a commercial publisher of high standard

The definition “refereed” relates to the process of selection of the articles submitted for publication. Articles are sent to a panel of experts who advise the editor on their standard and suitability for publication.

For more details, check our Library online tutorial How to identify academic resources at: http://www.lib.monash.edu/vl/scholar/scholcon.htm

Using electronic journals
The library has many suitable journals available via the web, both on and off campus. Access is via your authcate user name and password.

The library databases page is at: http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/databases/
This is a comprehensive page of links to databases that are an excellent source of quality journal articles as well as newspapers and magazines. As a starting point, look at the key databases listed on the subject guides and on the list on the next page.
**Some of the key databases for Psychology**

- **Expanded academic ASAP** – multidisciplinary database
- **Health and psychosocial instruments** - information on measurement instruments in the fields of health, psychology, psychosocial sciences, organisational behaviour, etc.
- **Mental measurements yearbook** - retrieve information and full text reviews of all published English-language standardised tests covering educational skills, personality, vocational aptitude, psychology, and related areas.
- **PsycINFO** - premier database for searching psychology and related subjects. It contains references to selected journal articles, books, book chapters, theses and technical reports.
- **Psychology : a SAGE full-text collection** - includes the full text of 30 journals published by SAGE and participating societies

**Web of science**

To use databases effectively, refer to the “How to use” database guides available from the Information Desk and on request. These guides give useful hints on effective search strategies, printing and emailing articles.

See the tutorial on developing a search strategy in the Library online tutorials at: [http://www.lib.monash.edu/vl/howind.htm](http://www.lib.monash.edu/vl/howind.htm)

**Using the internet for research**

Tips for effective research using search engines such as Google are available at: [http://www.lib.monash.edu/vl/google/googlcont.htm](http://www.lib.monash.edu/vl/google/googlcont.htm)

**Citing and referencing**

It is crucial that you make appropriate acknowledgement of the work you refer to. If not, you may be accused of plagiarism. APA (American Psychological Association) is the referencing system used by the Psychology department. The library has a Citing and referencing page at [http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/](http://www.lib.monash.edu.au/tutorials/citing/) which explains and gives examples of the APA style.

**Getting assistance in the library**

If you need help using the services offered by the library, please come to the Information Desk. Bring a copy of your assignment question with you. See details for this service for off-campus learners at [http://www.lib.monash.edu/services/offcampus/search.html](http://www.lib.monash.edu/services/offcampus/search.html)

**Useful library web site**


**The Gippsland Library Subject Librarians** are available for consultation.

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