

Top 10 Tips for Achieving Assignment Success

How to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively use information

1. Use the right information source

Selecting the right information source will ensure more appropriate search results and save you time.

Oxford Reference Online contains dictionaries, handbooks and encyclopaedias. Searching this will help you understand the terminology used in your subject, and think of alternative search terms.

Think about other forms of media that might be useful. For example, most things in the arts, social sciences, health and education will have relevant newspaper articles.

Newsbank contains current news reports, and **GALE Historical Newspapers** contains historical news items.

As well as hardcopy books the library subscribes to 320,000 eBooks, accessed through the library catalogue. You can also start your search by using [Discover More](#) to access journal articles.

2. Search Terms

Think carefully about the words you use to search for your information. Be specific rather than just using broad general terms. It is the keywords that you use that are the most important thing to get right when you search a database.

3. Search Tips

Link keywords using AND, OR, NOT. AND narrows a search, OR widens a search NOT excludes the term. If you have a phrase use quotation marks e.g. "Social Media". This means that the whole phrase will be searched for, rather than the individual terms.

4. Scope

Target the coverage of your topic to a specific date or geographical region and be consistent with your searches in relation to this.

5. Finding the actual article

The PDF full text of the article will be located within most of our eJournal collections and databases but if the full text isn't there, search by the title of the journal you need in the library catalogue to check Learning Services' access to a particular journal.

6. Evaluate the information

Evaluate the information that you find. Consider whether the article is relevant and think about how you will use the information.

7. Collate your bibliography or reference list as you find the information

Most essays require a reference list. This refers to all the sources you have cited within your essay. Some tutors will request a bibliography instead. A bibliography includes all the sources you have cited as well as anything you have read about the topic, even if you haven't cited it in your essay.

Collating your reference list or bibliography as you go will save you time and ensure that you don't lose sources you have utilised. If you are using Harvard referencing, there is a [Harvard reference guide](#) on the Learning Services webpages.

8. Save your assignments in more than one place

Always save your work in more than one location, for example; on your Edge Hill student drive, on an external USB, or as an email attachment.

9. Proofread your work

Remember to read through your assignments to check spelling, grammar, and referencing before you submit them. For more tips on proofreading, check out the additional support at www.ehu.ac.uk/uniskills

10. Use the Learning Services webpages

Use the Learning Services webpages for help with information, eResources and assignment guidance. Alternatively, drop in and see us at the Catalyst Helpdesk or visit us online at www.ehu.ac.uk/uniskills