LibrarySearch - A Quick-Start Guide for University of Greenwich Students

What is it?

When it comes to organising and discovering academic resources, you can think of LibrarySearch as the University of Greenwich’s equivalent to Google. Like when using Google, you can:

- type words into the search bar and be shown results that include those words;
- find different types of result;
- search multiple sources and see all the results at once (at least, almost all of them).

LibrarySearch is a database that collates almost all of the items purchased by the University. These resources include:

- physical and electronic books located at all UoG library sites – Stockwell Street, Avery Hill, Drill Hall;
- physical and electronic journals, and the electronic articles in those journals;
- dissertations, theses and conference papers;
- abstracts, book and article reviews.

Why use it?

Most people think of a library as providing print resources only, but succeeding in your degree programme requires a much deeper interrogation of scholarly materials. LibrarySearch is the only tool you can use to gain comprehensive and wide-reaching access to electronic resources, which have many benefits, such as:

- no loan lengths, no waiting times and no fines!
- increased accessibility features – easily adapted to suit all learners;
- available on a wide range of devices – no need to be on campus;
- a more focussed, more recent and more innovative research in articles than books;
- a wide variety of subjects, including highly specialist niches – great for dissertations.

Where can I find it?

Via the direct link https://librarysearch.gre.ac.uk (remember to login in the top right hand corner!), or through the University of Greenwich portal, via the ‘My Learning’ tab. You will see the search box in the middle of your screen. You must sign in via the Portal and access this LibrarySearch link to be fully authenticated and get access to the resources. Do not try to go through Google, Moodle or any other link.

Here you will also see a link called ‘Online databases and academic journals’, which you can use to access a specific database, as some specialist resources are not yet searchable in LibrarySearch (usually because they are non-standard file types, such as images or datasets).

You should never pay to access an article – seek help from your subject librarian who will be able to find out if the University has already purchased it. If we do not have a copy, we will source one at no cost to you.
How do I use it?

It’s easy! Remember that LibrarySearch is a tool to help you sort through information and find what is most relevant to you and your research, just like Amazon is a tool to help you sort through products to find what is most relevant to you and your shopping habits! Bearing this in mind, a tool is only as good as its master: what you search for (the actual words you choose) will determine the quality of your results. You need to be specific but flexible to change if one search term does not work. Remember: typing ‘Chemistry’ into LibrarySearch is like typing ‘DVDs’ into Amazon – you’re going to get thousands of results, and none of them will be very useful!

You can use the strategies in the following table to ensure successful searching in any database.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Define your question or title</td>
<td>What information do you want to find out? Which catalogue do you want to search (‘Everything’?, ‘Library Resources’? ‘E-resources’?)</td>
<td>Identify central but simple concepts – break them down if necessary, use quotes to join phrases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Decide on your search terms</td>
<td>What words are you going to include to help you find that information?</td>
<td>Think of synonyms for your keywords to widen your results; search for several keywords simultaneously to find more specific results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Identify any research that is not relevant</td>
<td>What words do you need to exclude to find the right information?</td>
<td>Use the ‘unwanted items’ field in the Advanced Search to exclude certain words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Refine your results</td>
<td>Do you have any specific requirements as to the type, date or location where the information was produced?</td>
<td>Use filters to remove results that do not meet your criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary tips:

- Don’t be too broad (you will get too many results)
- Don’t be too specific (you won’t find anything)
- Don’t expect to find the perfect match (your research will very likely involve coalescing other people’s research, that’s what makes it, and you, original!)
- Don’t give up! (try different search terms, synonyms, or root terms with an asterisk e.g. weather* would show results for weathering, weathered)

Who can I contact for more help?

Check out your subject guide pages! They contain loads of useful information about finding resources, using databases and referencing. Find them here: www.dhlsubjects.wikidot.com/start

Call us: Library Welcome Desk 01634 883278  
Tweet us: @drillhalllib @UoGLibraries

Email us: dhl-librarians@gre.ac.uk  
Drop in: Monday - Friday 11am - 3pm