Literature searching cycle and planning document

- Controlled vocabulary terms
- Synonyms
- Keywords
- Spelling

- Library catalogue
- Relevant library journal databases
- Other resources

Identify main concepts

Select library resources to search

Review and refine results

Search resources

- Evaluate results
- Rethink keywords and terms searched
- Identify other library resources to search
- Create alerts

- Boolean operators
- Proximity searching
- Truncation searching
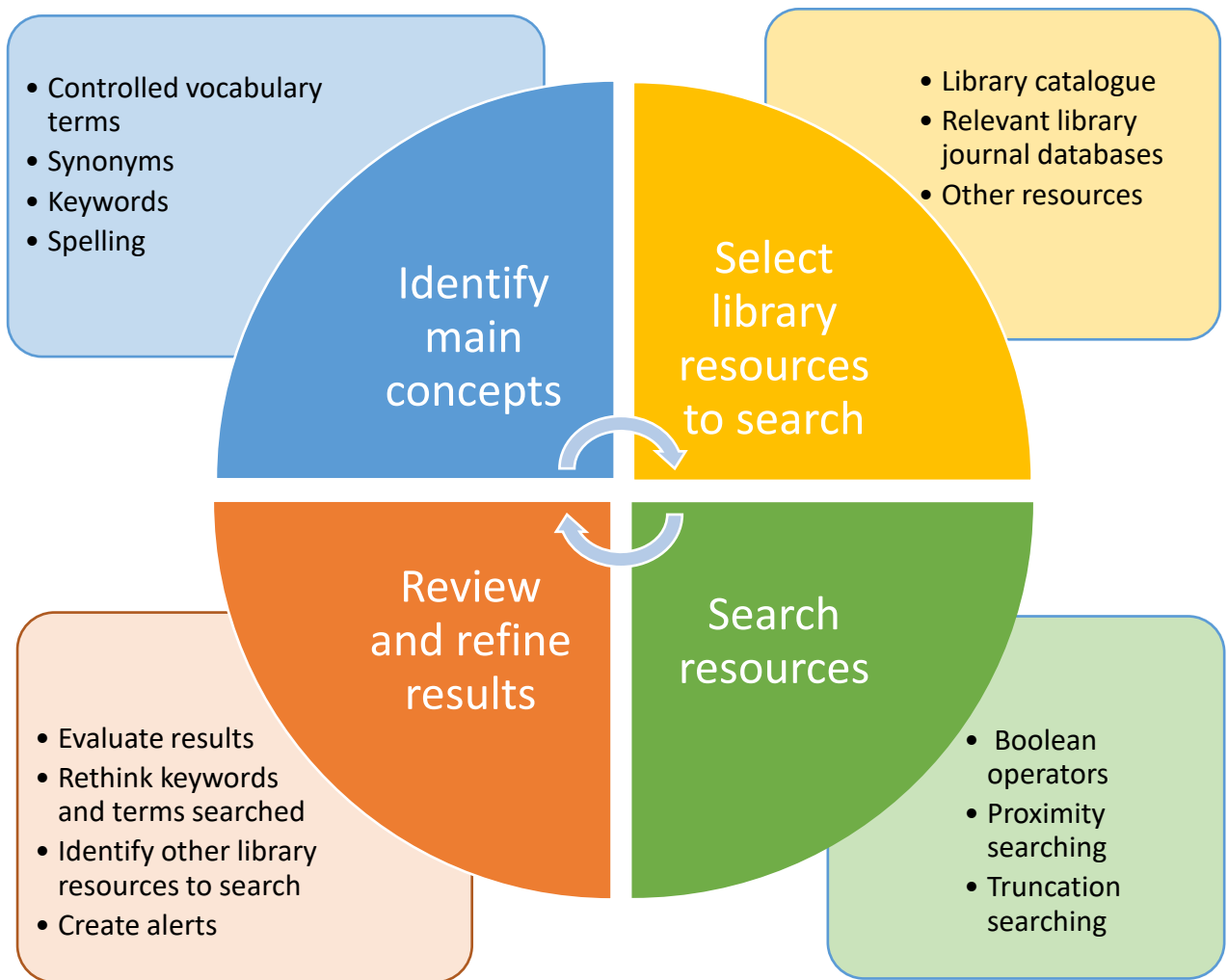
Search Tips

You can contact any [Faculty Liaison Librarian](#) for assistance with searching.

Boolean search terms or operators help to refine your search. There are three Boolean operators: AND, OR, NOT

The following table illustrates the operation of Boolean terms:

And	Or	Not
Each result contains **all** search terms.	Each result contains **at least one** search term.	Results **do not contain** the specified terms.
The search *heart* **and** *lung* finds items that contain **both** *heart* and *lung*.	The search *heart* **or** *lung* finds items that contain **either** *heart* **or** items that contain *lung*.	The search *heart* **not** *lung* finds items that contain *heart* **but do not contain** *lung*.

To make even better use of Boolean operators, you can use *parentheses* to nest query terms within other query terms.

You can enclose search terms and their operators in parentheses to specify the *order in which they are interpreted*. Information *within* parentheses is read *first*, then information *outside* parentheses is read *next*. For example,

When you enter **(mouse OR rat) AND trap**, the search engine retrieves results containing the word mouse or the word rat together with the word trap in the fields searched by default.

If there are nested parentheses, the search engine processes the *innermost* parenthetical expression first, then the next, and so on until the entire query has been interpreted. For example,

((mouse OR rat) AND trap) OR mousetrap

Please note: It is always a good idea to check out the search tips for the database that you are using.

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Phrase searching allows you to search for a two or more words together in a phrase. In most databases use quotation marks around the terms to be searched as a phrase. "global warming" , "climate change" , "Yanco Agricultural Institute"

Proximity searches

Near operator (N)/n	Indicates distance between words, but not the order	**tax W/5 reform** would match tax reform and reform of income tax
Within operator (W)/n	Terms must appear within n words of one another in the order in which entered	**tax W5 reform** would match "tax reform" and "tax where the reform appeared" but would not match "reform of income tax"

Wildcards and Truncations symbols

A wildcard or truncation symbol will help to find variations of a word. Again these symbols are database specific.

Truncation symbols are used to replace the ending of a word to find all forms of that word. For example:

Irrig* where * is the truncation symbol will find irrigates, irrigation, irrigated, irrigation, irrigator, irrigating

A wildcard character replaces a single character so find different spellings of a work. For example:

Wom?n where ? is the wildcard symbol will find women, woman

Please note: It is always a good idea to check out the search tips for the database that you are using.

Identify main concepts – what is your research question?

Write down your research question

Select keywords

Write down keywords, phrases, terms and themes that define your research question/s

Don't forget to include synonyms, spelling variations or common names and common abbreviations

Identify library resources to search

Journal databases

Citation databases

eBooks

Primo search

Theses & dissertations

Search techniques explained

Review and refine searches as needed

	Concept 1	and →	Concept 2	and →	Concept 3	and →
List all key words/terms as stated in your topic description above	Social networking sites		Cultural change		Young adults	
	OR ↓		**OR** ↓		**OR** ↓	
List search terms using truncation* and wildcards?	Networking site* Social website*		Cultur* change*		Young adult* Youth Teenager* Adolescent*	
	OR ↓		**OR** ↓		**OR** ↓	
List synonyms, alternate spelling, language, etc.	Facebook Twitter Online social site*		Societal change*		Young men Young women	
	OR ↓		**OR** ↓		**OR** ↓	
List words derived from available thesaurus	Online social networks (Academic Search Complete) Social media (PsycINFO)				Youth (Academic Search Complete)	

Taken from Deakin University search planner