

Literature review – top tips

1 Try experimenting with different search terms when using online search tools (e.g. DiscoverEd).



Make use of search functions that allow you to specify a date range e.g. the year you would like to begin from.

2 Always keep an accurate record of all of the sources that you use for your bibliography/reference list.



3 Make use of the bibliography in the journal articles or textbooks that you are reading as this can help you to increase the breadth of your literature review.



4



Use a reading summary sheet or electronic document to capture the key information and the argument from your sources.

Make space to add your own evaluation of both of these.



5 Create a logical structure for your literature review and the way you have approached it.

This structure could be chronological or thematic or another form more suitable for your investigation.

6 Make sure your research voice comes through clearly.

Think about how you have developed your views.

What evidence convinced you?

Indicate your own stance.

7 Be selective



Choose a selection from everything you have read.

Check the relevance of the selected sources to your topic and research question(s).

Limit the amount of descriptive reporting.

8 Make a summary of the key elements of your review.

- You can refer to this as you carry out your own research investigation.
- You can revisit and check how it contributes to your line of reasoning, overall argument and conclusions.

