

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.

Make sure your research voice comes through clearly.

- 6 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.

