Information and Literature Searching for MPhil/PhD Students

# Week 3

## Readings for Week 3

* [Collini, S. (2018, November 8). Kept Alive for Thirty Days. London Review of Books, 40(28), 35–38.](https://www.lrb.co.uk/v40/n21/stefan-collini/kept-alive-for-thirty-days)

Collini manages to take the mystery out of metrics and, to a large extent, our almost ridiculous reliance on metrics. He does this by using some humorous day-to-day examples.

* [Giustini, D., & Kamel Boulos, M. N. (2013). Google Scholar Is Not Enough to Be Used Alone for Systematic Reviews. Online Journal of Public Health Informatics, 5.](https://doi.org/10.5210/ojphi.v5i2.4623)

Google Scholar (GS) has been noted for its ability to search broadly for important references in the literature. However, is it appropriate for a systematic review or should students be using databases to ensure a more thorough search?

* [Hicks, D., & Wouters, P. (2015). The Leiden Manifesto for Research Metrics. Nature, 520, 430–1.](https://www.nature.com/polopoly_fs/1.17351%21/menu/main/topColumns/topLeftColumn/pdf/520429a.pdf?origin=ppub)

Evaluating research is essential to gauge impact and one way to do this is look at the number of citations for a journal article or author. However, citation metrics have been misused in the past and one way to counter this is through the responsible use of metrics. The Lieden Manifesto provides a comprehensive approach towards an improved assessment of research and proposes guidelines on best practice in the use of metrics in research evaluation.

* [Rekdal, O. B. (2014). Academic urban legends. Social Studies of Science, 44, 638–654.](http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0306312714535679)

This article demonstrates the importance not taking for granted the information that is presented in journal articles. The importance of checking and evaluating content, even by experts, is something that a researcher needs to do as part of the workflow. This is because, as Rekdal states, 'authors have lazily, sloppily, or fraudulently employed sources, and peer reviewers and editors have not discovered these weaknesses in the manuscripts during evaluation'.

## https://libapps-eu.s3.amazonaws.com/accounts/1878/images/1_goi_review_method.jpgAbout

The third week of the course focuses on citation searching, impact and information evaluation.  We will do this by looking at ways in which the scholarly impact of a work is measured by citation counts.  You will also be introduced to ways in which you can critically evaluate information sources.

## Citation Searching

Although not 100% accurate as there are in-built biases in bibliometrics or citation counts, citation measures can be used to gage either author, article or journal impact.   These measures can be helpful when evaluating information e.g. whether the author is an authority in their field and their impact on other scholars (author impact) or whether an article is deemed to be the 'classic' piece of research in any particular subject (article impact).  Researchers can also use citation tools to strategically plan where they could publish by considering high-impact journals.

A number of databases contain citation counts. These include:

* [Academic Search Complete](http://0-search.ebscohost.com.catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk/login.aspx?authtype=ip&profile=ehost&defaultdb=a9h) (available from Senate House Library)
* [ERIC](http://metalib.ucl.ac.uk/V/?func=native-link&resource=UCL00079)
* [Google Scholar](http://scholar.google.com/)
* [JSTOR](http://metalib.ucl.ac.uk/V/?func=native-link&resource=UCL00730)
* [PsycINFO](http://metalib.ucl.ac.uk/V/?func=native-link&resource=UCL00118)
* [SCOPUS](http://metalib.ucl.ac.uk/V/?func=native-link&resource=UCL01086)

To learn how to search these databases, watch the video demonstrations embedded in the [IOE LibGuide Bibliometrics and Citation Searching](http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/c.php?g=482227&p=3298076).

## Evaluating Information

The short posts on [**understanding research**](https://theconversation.com/uk/topics/understanding-research-12389) in 'The Conversation' ask some important questions about research, including the critical evaluation of published research.  Make sure you read the comments after each post as this will provide you with insight into the current debates with reference to open access, peer-review, the dissemination of research and the critical appraisal of research findings.

An example of **how to review of literature** can be found [here](https://medium.com/ussbriefs/lecture-capture-dubious-scholarship-and-market-forces-6f6c8dcb960d) If you are unsure about what a peer-reviewed jounal is - watch this video:  [What is a scholarly/peer-reviewed journal?](http://youtu.be/PuyCJnv3auk)

***Tip!*** Do not disregard practitioner journals as they often contain case-studies.

Here are answers to a couple of **frequently asked questions** relating to information evaluation:

* [How can I find out whether a journal I have found on the web is good enough to use for my academic work?](http://libanswers.ioe.ac.uk/a.php?qid=295422)
* [How can I find out whether an author I have come across is an expert in the subject area?](http://libanswers.ioe.ac.uk/a.php?qid=353401)

## Task 1

Select a reading on your research that has the highest citation rate based on searches conducted on the Web of Science, SCOPUS or a subject-specific database.

Use the file below to document your searching and your citation counts.

Compare the citation count to the count in Google Scholar.  Is the count higher or lower?  Why is this the case?

* [Searching and Citation Searching](https://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/ld.php?content_id=32015552)

## Task 2

Next, evaluate the article you found in Task 1 ,or another which you want to read, using the REVIEW method (see pdf below) or other evaluation methods - see [here](https://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/evaluating) for more information.

Now that you have evaluated the information, will you be using the information source in your literature review? Explain why you may or may not consider it for inclusion.

* [REVIEW Method](https://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/ld.php?content_id=32015368)

This method has been put together by the University of Sydney, Australia.

## Additional Resources

Data can also be reused. When it is reused, it is given a citation count.  You can find data sources and how to manage data in the IOE [LibGuide for Research Data](http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/researchdata).  Making your data openly available in data repositories may help attract citations. Publishing an article about the data you have - i.e. how, why, when you collected the data and what further research is possible through the reuse of data will also help to promote the re-use of the data.

## [Using Other Libraries](http://ble.ioe.ac.uk/mod/url/view.php?id=96928)

As a UCL researcher, you can now become a member of the main University of London Library, [Senate House Libraries](http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/senatehouseunilondon).  As a doctoral student you also have access to over 170 HEI libraries in the U.K. and Northern Ireland via the [SCONUL](http://libguides.ioe.ac.uk/sconulaccess) scheme.