



Creating a search term grid

Introduction

Effective researching is essential in order to write a high quality assignment. It is therefore important that your search for information is both comprehensive and structured. This resource outlines how creating a search term grid can assist this process.

Creating a search term grid

Stage 1: Highlight the topics in your question that you need to research.

Example:

“Critically evaluate how **study skills** **teaching** enhances **university students** **grades**”

Stage 2: Position this information in a table

Example:

Keywords	Study skills	Teaching	University Students	Grades
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Stage 3: Under each keyword list other related words that would make your search more comprehensive

Example:

Keywords	Study skills	Teaching	University Students	Grades
Related words	Essential skills Core skills	Lectures 1:1s Workshops Seminars Online	Undergraduates Postgraduates high	Performance Results

Stage 4: Search using combinations of keywords / related words

It is usually a good idea to start searching by using your keywords. Then systematically swap keywords for a related word.

Example:

Study skills + teaching + university students + grades

Essential skills + teaching + university students + grades

Core skills + teaching + university students + grades

It is also recommended that you keep a list of the word combinations that you have already used – along with where you have searched.

Please note:

- Ensure that your related words are directly relevant to your keywords – if you select related words that are only tentatively linked you could find that you go off on a tangent when writing the assignment
- If in the process of your research you identify other related words you should add these into your search term grid.

Further information

The Learning Resources Study Hub provides a range of opportunities (such as workshops and drop-ins) for you to enhance your academic skills. For more information visit:

lrweb.beds.ac.uk/studyhub

