Advanced Searching with Summon

This guide will help you if you are searching for articles on a topic, if you are already have details of an article please go to ‘Finding journal articles in the Online Library’

If you have not used Summon before you will find it more helpful to look at the interactive Summon Quick start guide

1. Before you begin your search

Our Summon search is powerful and easy to use; therefore even with minimum planning it is likely you will find useful results. After you have done your initial search you can use tools within Summon to improve it (see section 2 of this guide.) However you will save time if you think carefully about what you want to know before you begin your search.

Write down some words or phrases as they may help you to define what information you need. The words and phrases are referred to as ‘keywords’ which are what you are going to use to search Summon. The articles will have keywords assigned to them by experts, so if you choose the right words you will find the information you want.

- If you use very general keywords you will retrieve a lot of articles but many could be irrelevant, if you use precise terms you get fewer articles but they will be related to your search.

Example: ‘Teaching’ is a very general keyword that could describe information about becoming a teacher, different teaching methods and how to be an effective teacher. If you type ‘Teaching’ into Summon you would retrieve a large number of results. To make the search more precise you would need to think about what exactly you wanted to find out about teaching, if you wanted to know about different ways of teaching you would use the more precise term ‘Teaching Methods.’

- Once you have your list of keywords it is a good idea to think of some alternative words that could be used to describe your ideas. You could consider:

  Differences in spelling UK/US eg behaviour / behavior
  Single and plural versions of words eg woman/Women
  Relevant abbreviations and acronyms, eg EU or EEC for European Union
  Technical terms and jargon, eg Hansard for Parliamentary Debates
  Alternative usage and vocabulary, eg narcotics / drugs, Changes in terminology, eg Native Americans / Red Indians, Eskimos / Inuits
Synonyms – words which have the same or similar meaning to your search terms. Eg for Online Shopping use Electronic Commerce

Narrowing Searches

Phrase Searching- Put quotation marks around the words in your search to find where your search terms appear next to each other. For example “adult education” would find articles where this exact phrase appeared, whereas typing adult education is a less narrow search as it would find all articles with the word adult and the word education in.

Use the word NOT- You can exclude words from a Summon search by using the word ‘NOT’. If you were interested in the education of people in secondary school and beyond you would use this search- Education NOT primary

Broadening searches

If you search returns few or irrelevant records you might have more success if you can think of alternative search terms. To search for records that contain one or more of your search terms, link them together with the word OR.

Self-esteem OR self-confidence AND learning- This is a search to find articles on whether self confidence affects the ability to learn, self esteem is added as an alternative word for self-confidence so more results will be found.

Once you have performed your search you will be shown your search results. It is likely that a large number of results will be retrieved; the next part of the guide will show you how to make your search more relevant and give you a more manageable set of results.
2. **Using the ‘Refine Your Search’ menu**

As you can see, this search on “adult education” has retrieved a large number of results. To judge whether the article is relevant to your search, you can view an abstract by clicking on the magnifying glass icon. To reduce the number of results and increase the relevance of your search, use the left hand menu.

**The ‘Refine your Search’ menu** – This is on the left hand side of the Summon search page.

Click in the boxes to refine the search. You can check as many boxes as you want, but you will need to allow the page to refresh each time you make a selection.

To find reliable sources, click ‘Limit to articles from scholarly publications, including peer-review’, to ensure items are in the Online Library click on ‘Items with full text online.’

Remember to tick the ‘Keep search refinements’ button to save your changes.
3. The Advanced Search Screen in Summon

**Content Type**
This shows you how many different types of material have been found for your search. The search in this screenshot has only retrieved journal articles and book reviews. Some searches will retrieve a greater variety of sources, select ‘More options’ to view them and also to exclude resources from the search, for instance you may want to exclude book reviews.

**Subject Terms**
Narrow down your topic further by selecting subject terms. Once again you can use the ‘more options’ to view other subject terms and to exclude terms from your search.

**Publication Date**
Use the slider to change the publication date or select your date using the drop down menu. Leave the ‘to’ fields blank to search for the most recent information.
Summon also has an advanced search screen, you can reach this screen at the top of the Summon results page once you have performed a search. The advanced search screen allows you to perform particular types of searches which you cannot do in the initial search screen. Below are some screenshots of the searches you can do.

**The Advanced Search Screen**

**Finding articles by author about a topic**

- **With these terms:** "adult education"
- **Written/created by:** Joseph Lee
- **With these words in the title:**
- **ISBN:**
- **From this publication:**
- **Volume:** and **Issue:**
- **Dates published from:**
- **Show with this format:** Any Format
- **Show Only:**
  - Items with full text online
  - Scholarly materials, including peer-reviewed
  - Items in the library catalog (mostly print and physical materials)
- **Exclude from results:**
  - Newspaper articles
  - Book reviews
  - Dissertations
- **Expand your results:**
  - Include results from outside your library’s collection

Click to perform your search.

**Finding articles on a topic in a particular journal**

This search would find all articles about education by the author Joseph Lee.
You could also use the advanced search screen if you had incomplete information about an article (for instance you might know the year of publication, the author and the journal title but not the title of the article.)

Further help can be clicking on the Summon help menu or by contacting the library team.

Enquiry Form  http://www.external.shl.lon.ac.uk/help/enquiries/index.php

Email address  OnlineLibrary@shl.lon.ac.uk

Phone number  020 7862 8478