AMED
Advanced Search
A workbook prepared by the Ulster University Library Life & Health Science Subject Team on searching in the AMED database
Introduction

The aim of this workbook is to show you how to carry out an advanced search using AMED.

What is AMED?
AMED (Allied and Complementary Medicine) (1985 – present) – complementary therapy resource of approximately 600 journals produced by the Health Care Information Service of the British Library. Professions and topics covered include; physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, podiatry, palliative care and rehabilitation. AMED is supplied to Ulster University through the OVID platform.

Learning Outcomes:
- Accessing AMED from the Ulster Portal.
- The Advanced Search screen and Subject Headings.
- Keyword searching.
- Advanced searching techniques; truncation and wildcards.
- Advanced searching techniques; proximity searching.
- Combining terms.
- Planning a search.
- Carrying out a search in AMED.
- Applying Limits.
- Viewing results and finding full text.
- Creating a personal account to save searches, articles and set up alerts.
- Exporting article citations to Refworks.

ACCESS

- Log on to the Portal at http://portal.ulster.ac.uk.
- Select the Library & ICT tab.
- Select the Databases link, displayed under Key Services, on the right hand side of the screen. The A-Z listing of Library Databases is displayed on the screen.
- Click on A and scroll down to select AMED.
- On the next screen click on Proceed to open the database.
• If you see this screen, enter Ulster and click on the Ulster University link:

![Authentication Screen]

**AUTHENTICATION**

You will need to identify yourself as an Ulster University user to gain access to the database. On the screen showing an artist’s impression of the new Belfast campus, enter your **student email address** and **Ulster Network password**. This will authenticate you for the current browsing session.

**The Advanced Search screen and Subject Headings**

AMED opens up in the Advanced Search screen with the Map Term to Subject Heading function automatically selected.

![Advanced Search Screen]

**What are Subject Headings?**

AMED uses a thesaurus of standardised indexing terms called Subject Headings. Subject Headings are assigned to articles in order to classify what they are about and are based on the content of the article rather than the terminology used. AMED will
try and match or 'map' your topic to the closest matching Subject Heading in their thesaurus e.g. if you search for cancer AMED will recommend the heading; neoplasms.

Keyword search

Not every term has a Subject Heading so you may need to carry out a keyword search. AMED will always give you the option of searching by keyword at the bottom of the list of suggested subject headings.
You will also need to use a keyword search in conjunction with a subject heading search if you want to make sure that all articles containing your terms, regardless of context, are retrieved. This stage is necessary if carrying out a systematic review or higher level of research (e.g. final year dissertation, Masters or PhD) and you will need to use your own judgement and knowledge to decide how in depth you need to search a topic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select</th>
<th>Subject Heading</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Diet</td>
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<td>Arthritis rheumatoid</td>
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<td>Nutrition</td>
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<td>Treatment outcome</td>
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<td>Vegetarianism</td>
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<td>Food</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Case report</td>
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<td>Diet therapy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dietary supplements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vegan.mp. search as Keyword</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Truncation and Wildcards**

When searching by keyword, databases will usually only find the exact term you enter and not any plurals or variations. In order to make sure that all variants of a term are found a number of advanced search symbols can be used.

- * is the truncation symbol, use to find all the various different endings of a term
  e.g. herb* will find herb, herbs, herbal, herbalist, herbalism
- # is the wildcard symbol that will replace 1 character within a word
  e.g. organi#ation will find organisation and organization
- ? is the wildcard symbol that will replace 1 or 0 characters within a word
  e.g. behavio?r will find behaviour and behavior

Wildcards can be useful for finding both British and American word variations.

It is not always necessary to use advanced searching techniques, only use when they make sense for the context of the question.
Proximity Searching

Proximity searching enables you to search for two or more terms within a set number of words. It is a useful technique to use when you want to find terms that are near to reach other. The proximity operator in AMED is ADJ followed by the number of words:

- chronic ADJ pain will find the two terms next to each other in the order entered.
- chronic ADJ1 pain will find the two terms next to each other in any order.
- chronic ADJ2 pain will find the terms within 1 words of each other in any order.
- chronic ADJ3 pain will find the terms within 2 words of each other in any order e.g. articles about chronic neck pain and pain relating to chronic illness will both be found.

Combining Terms

You will need to combine terms using OR, AND in order to retrieve the most relevant results.

Use OR to combine terms which are similar, this will widen a search and increase the number of articles retrieved.
Use **AND** to combine terms which are different, this will narrow and reduced the number of articles retrieved.

**Planning Your Search**

Database collections can be huge and you need to be well prepared and specific about what information you want to find. Plan your search before you start; what information do you want to find out?

In this section we will use AMED to search for articles to answer a specific question. Look at the question below and ask, what are the key topics or concepts and how else may they be described?

**Does a programme of yoga improve the management of low back pain?**

It is a good idea to write down the key topics and then list any variations or alternative terms that could also be used to describe them.

**Remember**

- Not all topics will have many or any variations or alternative terms.
- Use your own professional knowledge and judgement to decide how deep you want to go into the search process.
You can’t just type the question into the search box as this is an unsystematic method of searching and would return too few relevant results.

It can be very useful to look at the Library book stock before searching the databases, a good up to date text book on your chosen subject area can help familiarise you with the subject and with the terminology used by academic publications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 1</th>
<th>Topic 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low back pain</td>
<td>yoga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lumbago</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sciatica</td>
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</table>

Carrying out a search in AMED

In the Advanced Search type in the first set of search terms beginning with low back pain, as illustrated below.

Make sure that the Map Term to Subject Heading checkbox is ticked. Click on Search.

AMED displays a list of terms, Subject Headings, which it considers to best match your search terms, if there is an exact match AMED will automatically select this. Each heading is displayed in blue.
The Subject Heading is highlighted, click on it to open up the subject heading thesaurus tree.

This is a list of all the Subject Headings available and is ranked by hierarchical relationship rather than alphabetically.

Subject headings are assigned at a topic’s most specific level and can have broader and/or narrower subject headings within the tree.

In this example low back pain is a narrower heading within the broader subject Backache, which in turn is itself a narrower heading within the overall subject of Pain.

**Explode**

The Explode box appears to the right of the number of articles found, it also appear on the previous screen as shown below.
If you select **Explode** it will include all the narrower subject headings (if available) for your term. In our example low back pain has no narrower headings so cannot be exploded. Pain does have narrower headings, so if explode is selected you will search for this main heading and all the narrower headings indented underneath.

Any topic with showing the plus sign in the Subject Heading thesaurus tree can be exploded e.g. .

You will need to repeat this process for all Subject Headings you use. If you don’t check the thesaurus you may be missing vital additional terms.

Scroll to the top of the screen and click on **Continue** to carry out the search.

The details of the search and the number of articles found will be recorded in the **Search History** part of the screen; to open the panel click on Search History.
As you progress each search will be recorded in the Search History panel. Repeat the process with the next term lumbago. This time none of the Subject Headings seem appropriate so we will need to use the search as Keyword option at the bottom of the Subject Heading suggestions. Select and then click on Continue.

The search history panel will now show 2 searches.

Repeat this process with the remaining term sciatica. mp. (standing for multi-purpose) after a term denotes it is a keyword search, and / that the Subject Heading has been used.

Each of these three searches is related to the low back pain aspect of your topic. You now need to combine these searches to create one set of results containing all the records together.
In the **Search History** panel of the screen tick the checkboxes beside each search set and click on Combine Selections with **OR**.

This will create a fourth search set.

You are now ready to search for the next topic in your question; yoga.

Enter the term yoga into the Search box and click on Search. The Subject Heading Yoga is displayed at the top of the list, when you click into the heading you will see there are no more narrower headings.

Click on continue and this will create a fifth search.
Next you need to find articles which discuss the management of low back pain using yoga. To do this you must combine search 4 (low back pain or lumbago or sciatica) with search 5 (the yoga search). Tick the checkboxes beside search 4 and search 5 and this time Combine Selection with AND.

A sixth set of results, search 6 is created.

Next we need to limit these results to those published from 2010 onwards and to articles published in the English Language only.

**Applying Limits**

Find the Limits link underneath the main search box, click to open.
You will see a list of most commonly used limiters but we need to use the Additional Limits, click on this to open.

On the next screen select the limits you want to apply.

Scroll up and click on Limit a Search to apply.
The final set of results, search 7, is displayed and the completed search will look like this:

Click on Display or scroll down the page to view the article details.

**Viewing Results and finding Full Text**

Each record is displayed like so; title of the article is in blue, authors, journal title and publication details - date, volume, part number and the page numbers.
Click on the blue article title to view more information.

This fuller record lists the Subject Headings, assigned to the article and an abstract. The abstract will provide you with a summary of the original article and should help you decide if the journal article is going to be relevant (not every record will include an abstract).

AMED, like most academic databases, provides bibliographic details only and you will usually have to link out to another supplier to find the full text of an article.

The button is displayed on the right hand side of the record. Click on this to check if the Library can link you to the full text of the article.

On the next screen select a supplier by opening one of the hyperlinks, in this example either from Science Direct or ProQuest.
You can now read onscreen or download/save/print the pdf.

If the U Find It cannot link you to full text, the following message will be displayed:

You can check the Library Catalogue and/or Google Scholar for full text. You will need to copy and paste the title of the journal/article into each respective resource. If no full text is available can use the Library Document Delivery Service, for more information go to http://library.ulster.ac.uk/documentdelivery/
Creating a Personal Account and Saving Searches

When you have finished your session and closed down AMED, your search history and any results found will be deleted. Next time you open up the database you will have to repeat the search from the beginning. If you want to save a search to re-run or use at a later date you can create a Personal Account that will save your search permanently.

Click on Save All; find it at the bottom of the Search History.

Click on Create a new Personal Account and complete the onscreen form.

Give the search a name and select Saved Search to save a search or Alert to set up an email alert to receive any new results.
If you wish to use both functions, you will need to first save the search and then set up the alert.

Not every article in your results list will be relevant. Select any which are by checking the tick box displayed on each record and clicking on Add to My Projects. You will then be prompted to create a project folder to place the articles in and if you have a personal account (and are signed in) these will also be saved permanently.

To retrieve a search, go to My Account and login, click on the My Workspace tab and then on My Searches and Alerts. Select the search you want to re-run by ticking the checkbox and then clicking on run.

**RefWorks**

To email citation records to RefWorks use the tick boxes beside each result you wish to export, then click on Export at the top of the results screen.
This opens the Export Citation List box, select Export to RefWorks and click on Export Citation(s). Your RefWorks account will open on the screen and the references will move over to your Last Imported Folder.

Close the Refworks screen and return to AMED.

You should now be able to carry out and save an Advanced Search in AMED.

Help

AMED has an excellent Help section: find it at the top of the search screen.
Don’t worry if you are having difficulties using the database; just contact a member of the Life and Health Sciences subject team who will be happy to help.

**For further information please contact your [Subject Librarian](mailto:)

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