Get going with
SPORT DISCUS
A workbook prepared by Ulster Library Life & Health Sciences Library staff on searching the SPORT DISCUS database

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this workbook is to show you how to search effectively for information in the Sport Discus database.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this workbook you should be able to:

- Access Sport Discus from the Library & ICT tab on the Portal.
- Carry out an Advanced Search using AND, OR, NOT and other advanced searching techniques such as truncation and limiters.
- Carry out a search using the inbuilt Thesaurus.
- View the results and find full text of the articles.
- Creating a personal account to save articles, searches and set up alerts.
- Export into Refworks.

WHAT IS Sport DISCUS?

It is the main database for sports science and sports studies, indexing over 600 journals as well as other material such as magazine articles, dissertations and conference proceedings it holds nearly 2 million records, with coverage going back to 1800. Subject coverage includes; coaching, nutrition, physiology, sports medicine, sports psychology, physical education, physical activity, health, and sport studies.

ACCESS

- Login to the Portal at [www.portal.ulster.ac.uk](http://www.portal.ulster.ac.uk)
- Select the Library & ICT tab.

AUTHENTICATION

If you see this screen, enter Ulster and click on the Ulster University link:
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.

- Select the Database link, displayed under **Key Services**, on the right hand side of the screen. The listing of Library Databases, sorted alphabetically by title, is displayed on the screen.
- Use the search box to look for Sport Discus.

- Click on the title of the database to access.
Sport Discus defaults to the advanced search screen as shown below.

![Advanced Search Screen](image)

**SEARCHING**

Databases such as Sport Discus contain large amounts of information and you need to be well prepared and specific about what you want to find. Plan your search before you start; decide on a question and then ask; what are the main key topics or concepts and how else may they be described.

*Example question* – **Does barefoot running have implications for running injuries?**

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic 1 Barefoot</th>
<th>Topic 2 Running</th>
<th>Topic 3 injuries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Long distance</td>
<td>fractures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimalist</td>
<td>marathon</td>
<td>Plantar fasciitis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Things to remember**

- Not all topics will have many or any variations or alternative terms.
- Use your own profession knowledge and judgement to decide how deep you want to go into the search process.
• When thinking of terms, keep in mind that most databases are produced in America and use American terminology e.g. football in Sport Discus refers to the American game not the International so you will need to use the term soccer.
• You can’t just type the question into the search book as this is an unsystematic method of searching and will 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.

**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. injur* will find injury, injuries, injured, injurious
- ? is the wildcard symbol that will replace 1 character within a word
  e.g. periodi?ation will find periodization and periodisation
- # is the wildcard symbol that will replace 1 or 0 characters within a word
  e.g. behavio#r will find behaviour and behaviour

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**

Sport Discus default is to search for the terms as a phrase and in the order entered e.g. a search for talent identification will find terms right next to each other in that order.
Proximity searching enables you to search for two or more terms within a set number of words in any order. It is useful technique to use when you want to find terms that are near each other. The proximity operator in Sport Discus is N followed by the number of words. You can also use truncation with the proximity function.

- Talent N3 identi* will find the terms within 3 words of each other regardless of the order.
  e.g. articles about identifying sporting talent as well as talent identification 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.

![Diagram](image_url)

**Concussion or head injuries** AND **rugby**

Only articles that contain both sets of terms will be found.

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**Carrying out a search**

Enter your terms into the search boxes using the appropriate techniques. You can construct searches by using the drop down menu to choose AND, OR. Alternatively you can type the connector terms directly into the search boxes.

- Use a separate search box for each different set of terms; this will make the search easier to follow.
- Always OR subject sets together before you combine with AND, otherwise the database will not be able to interpret what you are asking it to find.

Click on Search to continue.
Results are shown below the search boxes.

Limiting a search
The search has now been limited to academic articles published within the last 5 years, giving a final result set of 121 articles.

Pull the slider across to change the publication date range.

Another useful limit is Source Types, limit to only Academic Journals to get good quality material.

Using the Thesaurus
The Sport Discus thesaurus is a list of standardised ‘subject terms’ assigned to articles, it can be a useful way to find specific information e.g. on individual Olympic Games.

Click on the thesaurus option at the top of the main search page.

Enter your keyword into the **Browsing: Sports Thesaurus** search box, in this example Munich as we want to find articles about the 1972 Olympic Games.

You can now look through the results or combine with another search term.
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 **Thesaurus** subject terms assigned to the article. **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).

Sport Discus, 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.

If full text is available it will be clearly marked with ![PDF Full Text](#) or ![HTML Full Text](#).

If no full text is available click on the UU Find It button to search the Library’s journal holdings.

On the next screen select a supplier by opening one of the hyperlinks, in this example either from Science Direct or ProQuest.

You will then be linked to the article, where you can read online, download or save/print the pdf.
If the U Find It cannot link you to the 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 so to http://library.ulster.ac.uk/documentdelivery/

Saving a Search

In order to save your search history from the current session and re-run it at a later date you must create a Sport Discus account.

Open up the Search History.
Click on the **Save Searches /Alerts** button on the Search History / Alerts panel.

You will need to create your own account within Sport Discus to in order to save and retrieve searches and articles.
Go to Create a new Account and complete the onscreen form and Save Changes.

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.

Video Guide – Saving a search

Not every article in your results list will be relevant. Select any records which are by clicking on the Add to folder icon displayed on each record and if you have a personal account these will also be saved permanently.
Scroll to the very top of the screen and click on Folder.

Only the selected articles will be displayed in the folder. From here you can print, email, save, or export the records using the output functions displayed along the right side of the screen.

You can also create folders to organise and save articles into.

Retrieving a Saved Search
To retrieve a search, Sign In and click on the Folder icon.
A list of all your saved searches will be displayed. Click on the Retrieve Saved Search link below the barefoot running and injuries search.

The search will be displayed in the Search History/Alerts panel. Click on Rerun, in the Actions column, to review the results.

**Refworks**

To export an individual reference to Refworks open it up by clicking on the title and select Export, this will then give you the option to export to your Refworks account.
To export multiple records first add to folder by clicking on the folder icon on each record.

The icon will then change.

Scroll to the very top of the screen and click on Folder.
Only the selected articles will be displayed in the folder. From here you can print, email, save, or export the records using the output functions displayed along the right side of the screen.

**Help**

You should now be able to carry out an advanced search in Sport Discus.

Sport Discus itself 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:subjectlibrarian@library.ac.uk)

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