

Using Library resources: an introductory guide

1. Getting to know the Brookes Library

The Headington Library in the JHB is the main library at Oxford Brookes and covers all subject areas. There are 2 other Brookes libraries which you can use: Wheatley (Business Studies and Technology) and Harcourt Hill (Education, Religion & Philosophy).

The Headington Library is open 24 hours a day for most of the week during semester. Remember to always carry your student card with you whenever you are on campus. The Library has 6 floors. On Level 1 you'll find the Help Zone, Welcome Desk, book returns slots, reservations collection point and Short Loan. Books are on Levels 2, 3 and 4. If you're new to the Library, pick up a floor plan from the Help Zone to help you find your way around.

The Library has different zones for quiet and silent study. If you want to do group work and/or chat, head to The Platform (Level 3) or The Forum (Ground Floor). You can also book one of our Student Presentation Rooms for practising group presentations – ask at the Welcome Desk.

To get online in the Library, log into one of the Library PCs with your student number and portal password – these give you access to Internet, Google Mail, Brookes Virtual, Word etc. You can print via the University's Print Anywhere service – see <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/brookes-print/print-anywhere/>

Sign up for the University's Wi-Fi service Eduroam via the OBIS IT Services Web pages at <http://obis.brookes.ac.uk/>

The IT Service Desk is located in The Forum.

If you need any help with finding resources or using library services you can ask at the Help Zone on Level 1 of the Library.

Your **Academic Liaison Librarian** Joanna Cooksey is there to help you find and use library resources for your course. She is based on Level 3 of the Library but you're advised to email jcooksey@brookes.ac.uk first.

2. Researching for an assignment

For university assignments such as essays and presentations you're expected to read and use a variety of **secondary sources** such as books, newspapers articles, journal articles and Web sites.

“At this level of study, you are expected to use more than just opinion, common sense and spur-of-the-moment responses and to develop informed positions on issues. You do this through activities such as reading, debate...and critical reflection. ...In practice, this means searching out information to use to produce assignments.”
Cottrell, S. (2013) *The Study Skills Handbook*. 4th edn. Basingtoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Reading a variety of sources of information will help to:

- Stimulate your own ideas.
- Provide evidence to support your arguments.

3. Books

Books are a good place to start, as they may give you a useful overview of the subject. To find books, search on the **Library Catalogue** available on computers inside the Library and online via the Library Web site at

<http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/>

You can search by keyword, title or author.

When you find a book on the Catalogue that looks relevant, look for the **shelfmark** – a series of numbers and letters that tell you where the book is shelved in the Library and what subject it covers. The Library uses the Dewey system to arrange stock on the shelves which means that books on a similar subject will be shelved together, making it easier for you to browse.

Shelfmarks in the Library

Level 2

000s Computing & Publishing

100s Philosophy & Psychology

200s Religion

300s Social Sciences, including Economics, Politics, Tourism, Education, Law

400s Languages

Level 3

500s Natural Sciences, including Maths, Chemistry, Biology

600s Technology, including Business, Engineering, Medicine, Food science, Hospitality

700s to 719s Fine Art and Planning

Level 4

720s Rest of the Arts, including Architecture, Music, Cinema, Sport

800s Literature

900s Geography & History

Borrowing books

- You can take out up to 12 books. Use the self-service machines in the Library (you'll need your student card). Books are issued for 1 or 2 weeks.
- Books are automatically renewed unless they are reserved by another student. Check your Brookes emails for details of your renewals – fines are charged when reserved books are not returned.
- If any books you want are at Wheatley or Harcourt Hill Library, place a reservation via the Library Catalogue to have them sent to Headington.
- E-books are also listed on the Library Catalogue. You can read these from anywhere - just log in with your student number and password.

4. Newspaper and journal articles

Newspapers are a good place to find information which is up-to-date and which reflects popular views and discussion.

Journals can also provide information which is up-to-date, but also:

- They can give scholarly/academic articles, written by specialists in the subject.
- They provide an insight into current thinking, debate & research in the area.
- They can cover a topic in depth, e.g. a case study

Using databases to find articles

Databases can help you to find journal articles and other scholarly material written on a topic you're researching. There are also databases that focus on articles from newspapers and magazines.

NB We recommend using the Library Web site as your starting point (not Google!) – here you can connect to thousands of online resources which we subscribe to. These are free to you as Brookes students. You can access our databases online via the Library Web site in various ways:

On the Library Home page, choose **Subject Help ~ Oxford Brookes International Courses ~ Journals & Databases** to see a list of key databases and search services (direct link is <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/subject-help/oxford-brookes-international-courses/journal-articles-and-databases/>)

These include:

- *Academic Search Complete* covers all subject areas and can be a good starting point for researching any topic.
- *LexisLibrary* – for UK newspaper articles
- *Factiva* – for international newspapers and magazines.
- *Discover* is a service which lets you search our Library Catalogue and many (but not all) of our e-resources. This means you may find books, journal articles and other sources.

This page also lists some specialised databases for individual subject areas such as business, hospitality and education.

Other Subject Help pages will list key databases relevant for their particular area.

When using our Library databases log in when prompted with your Brookes student number and password.

Database search tips

Try compiling a list of keywords and phrases on the topic you're investigating to help your search. Think about:

How would you describe your topic? What words/phrases would you use?

Are there any alternative terms you could try instead e.g. climate change/global warming; Internet/Web; film/cinema?

Type these keywords or phrases into the search box (or boxes) on the database, linking them with 'and' to narrow down your search. For example:

Sustainability and architecture

Add in additional keywords to focus your search – each new word/phrase will narrow down your search, for example:

Internet and privacy and UK

It can be helpful to put phrases in quotation marks to keep the words together, for example:

“social networking”; “climate change”

Viewing the full-text of the article

Look for a link to a **PDF** file on the database to view and download or print the full-text article. If you see the **Full Text Finder** option next to a reference, click on this to check whether the article is available on another database and then link to it.

5. Referencing your sources

When you use secondary sources such as books, articles and web sites in your own academic work – directly or indirectly – you need to reference them properly. This will:

- Demonstrate that you've properly acknowledged others' work.
- Show the range of sources (e.g. books, articles, websites) you've used.
- Enable your reader to trace these sources quickly and easily.

Poor referencing will lose you marks, so to ensure you know how to reference sources correctly, check our guides. You can use:

- Library guide *Citing your references using the Harvard (author-date) system*
- *Cite Them Right Online*.

You can access these by going to the Library Home page, choosing **Subject Help ~ Oxford Brookes International Courses ~ Referencing and EndNote** (direct link is <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/library/subject-help/oxford-brookes-international-courses/referencing-and-endnote/>)

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