The Library

Finding academic information:

Games, Computing and Creative Technologies

Database User Guide
Your guide to finding academic information for Games, Computing & Creative Technologies

This guide is designed to introduce you to electronic academic databases relevant to creative technologies.

What are academic databases?

Online databases contain large amounts of current academic information and are ideal for researching a topic. The information included is primarily journal articles, but also included are newspaper articles, theses, conference papers, etc. Searching for information is easier using online databases than using printed material.

You should use academic databases rather than search engines such as Google because the material you will find is guaranteed to be reliable and of acceptable academic standard. The databases contain many peer-reviewed journals, this is the top quality academic information, that you should be using for assignments rather than information from websites found via Google.

Which are the most useful databases for your subject?

There are a number of databases listed in the subject guides that are relevant to courses within the School of Creative Technologies. All contain relevant information but some of the more important ones include:

Highly recommended databases:

**British Library Sounds (formerly Archival Sound Recordings)**
Explore over 50,000 selected recordings of music, spoken word, and human and natural environments.

**IEEE Xplore**
A full-text database providing access to IEEE Transactions, IEE Proceedings and other content from the IET. A wide range of topics are covered.

**ProQuest Central**
A multi-disciplinary academic database which covers most aspects of computing and technology. It consists of a collection of subject specific databases. Many articles are available in full-text but some are available as abstracts only.

**ScienceDirect**
This database provides access to full-text articles from over 2500 Elsevier Science journals in engineering, science and technology.

**SCOPUS**
Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database. It is not subject specific, but includes the broadest coverage of scientific, technical and social science literature. Some articles are full text, some are abstract and references only.
Top Tip

Most suppliers of electronic databases regularly update their interfaces, so the appearance of screens and steps in illustrations may be different to those in this guide, however the instructions for searching the databases will essentially be the same.

Getting started

Load the Library web pages: https://www.bolton.ac.uk/library/Home.aspx

You should now navigate to the relevant subject guide.

The Subject Guides pages

After clicking on Subject Guides as shown above, select the guide most relevant to your course from the list. Subject Guides display information on relevant databases, internet resources, study skills and links to relevant help guides, as well as contact details for your subject librarian.

It is possible to access each individual database and search for information. However, the Library has a search engine called Discover@Bolton which allows you to search most databases and other online resources simultaneously via a single search screen.

Therefore, this guide will focus on using Discover@Bolton effectively. You can access Discover@Bolton via any subject guide or the Library homepage.

Note: All the most important databases listed in subject guides relevant to courses in the School of Creative Technologies (apart from British Library Sounds) are available in Discover@Bolton.
Top Tip

If you use Discover@Bolton off campus, click on the red bar at the top of the screen to load the University of Bolton’s Electronic Resources login page and then enter your university username and password.

Discover@Bolton

Before you start your search think about the keywords you are going to search for. You should think about any related terms or synonyms you could try in case you don’t find anything suitable the first time. For further help with developing a search strategy, see the Discovering Information tutorial in the My Research Needs section of LEAP Online, which you can access from the Quick Links section on the Library homepage or any subject guide.

Finding a definition

It may be useful for you to define the terms included in your assignment in order to fully understand the topic you are researching. If you type a single keyword or phrase in the search box and run the search, a definition will appear on the right of the screen. Where available, this will be sourced from one of our reference databases, such as Credo Reference. However, if a definition isn’t available from these sources, Wikipedia will be used. Please check with your tutor as to its acceptability as a quotable reference.

Basic searching

Discover@Bolton can be accessed from the Library homepage or from any Subject Guide page by clicking on the relevant link.

Type a keyword for the topic you are looking for in the Search box and then click on the Search button – these features will be different depending on which way you accessed Discover.

Note: the image below shows how a basic search screen looks when accessed via a subject guide page.

For multiple words or a phrase, use speech marks, eg. “game art”

Top Tip

You can use * to replace letters within words, eg, organi*ation will search for organization and organisation. You can also use * to search for words with the same root e.g., gam* will search for games, gamers, gaming etc.
Narrowing your search

If your search has produced a lot of results you will need to narrow it down. One way of doing this is by adding another keyword(s) to your original search term. You can combine 2 or more terms by using **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT**.

Known as **Boolean Logic**, it is used by most electronic sources of information.

**AND** narrows a search by finding articles that contain both terms.
**OR** broadens a search by finding articles that contain either or both terms.
**NOT** narrows a search by finding articles that contain one term but not the other.

You can also refine a search by using the filter options to the left of your search results. These allow you to limit results to include ‘full text’ and ‘peer reviewed’ articles only, as well as limit by ‘item type’, ‘subject’, ‘publication date’ and ‘language’.

Peer-reviewed scholarly journals provide the highest quality academic information so you may wish to start with these results before looking at magazines, trade publications, etc.
**Advanced searching**

Advanced searching gives you more search options and removes the need to type AND, OR etc. Click on the Advanced Search icon at the top of the screen. This is useful if a basic search produced too many results. Select filters of your choice, such as **Author**, **Content type**, **Subject**, **Language**, **Date Range** or **Full Text Articles** only to give a smaller more relevant set of results.

The screen below shows available search fields and selections made in order to retrieve a smaller set of relevant results.
Looking at your search results

The results will show a mixture of different types of resource, such as ebooks, journal articles, newspaper articles theses etc. The type of resource is shown under the title and author/publication details.

To see the abstract (summary of an article), plus additional details about the record, click on Preview. To see related articles, click on Related Articles.

To look at the full text of a record, click on the Title or Full Text Online. You may be prompted to log in with your university username and password at this point.

Note: If Citation Online is shown, the full text of an article may not be available via the Library’s subscriptions.
Read the article’s abstract to decide if the article is relevant to your research. If you think it is, you can order the article for free online via the Library’s Inter-Library Loan service.
Click on Citation Online and on the next screen click on the button Request via Inter-Library loan. On the next screen, login to your Library account and submit your ILL request.
However, there may be plenty of other relevant full text journals available for your research so explore these before applying for an Inter-Library Loan.

Top Tip
You can sort your results by date of publication or relevance by clicking on 132 results sorted by date (newest) at the top of the results screen.
If you click on , you will be presented with a list of citation options, select Harvard. You can then either email or copy and paste records into your list of references or bibliography. Note: there are many variations of Harvard so make sure it is the one required by your tutor. You may need to amend the citation once you have copied it into your Word document.
Saving selected search results

Before you can export, print, or email a record or multiple records, you must first save selected results to a ‘folder’.

To do this, click on the folder icon at the right of the record. You will then notice that results appear in a folder at the top of the screen.

To open and view the contents of a folder, click on at the top right of the screen.

To delete a record from a folder, click on at the side of it. To close a folder and return to your results, click on Back to results at the top right of the screen.

Printing and emailing selected results

Once you have records in a folder, you have the option to print, email or export them.

Click on the folder icon and then choose whether you want to print, email or export them by clicking on the relevant option to the right.

Note: Contents of a folder are retained temporarily only, when you exit the database or after an extended period of inactivity (20mins) they will be cleared. You can permanently save items by creating a ProQuest RefWorks* account – see overleaf.
*This is not the same version of RefWorks you can access from the Databases A-Z list, but a simplified version. If you already have a RefWorks account, you will not be able to access it via Discover@Bolton RefWorks.

**ProQuest RefWorks**

Creating a ProQuest account allows you to store all your saved items permanently and to manage and organize your documents effectively. To create an account, click on the menu icon at the top right of the screen. At the drop down box, click on RefWorks Log In. On the next screen, click on No account-sign up here.

Enter your university email address – not a personal email - and choose your own password. Once you have created your account, when you click on the folder icon of a record it will be permanently stored in your RefWorks account.

To access your account at any time, click on the folder icon at the top of the screen.

You can create folders to organize your results by using My Folders. You can also share resources with other people using the Sharing function, which allows you to email them direct from RefWorks.

It is possible to select resources to create an exportable bibliography or reference list. Select relevant results and click on , then select Create Bibliography. Select a style, such as Harvard. You can then copy and paste your results into your assignment.

**Note:** you may need to edit each entry so that it fits the Bolton Harvard style.

There are many other functions which you can explore by clicking on the help button.
Top Tip

If you need help using Discover@Bolton, click on the HELP button at the top of the screen.

British Library Sounds

Explore over 50,000 unique selected recordings from the British Library’s extensive collection which come from all over the world and cover the entire range of recorded sound including music, drama, literature, oral history, wildlife and environmental sounds.

From the list of Subject Guides, select the one most relevant to your course. Then click on Databases, journals and articles. Scroll down and click on British Library Sounds.

You can also access British Library Sounds from the Databases A - Z list.

Note: British Library Sounds is not included in Discover@Bolton and has to be searched separately.

Searching

You can search the entire site by entering a search term in the Search box or you can select a Collection and then do a search in that particular category.

At the results page, click on a title for more information about a particular recording.
At the bottom of the next page, more information is provided about the record such as its duration, date of recording, interviewers, interviewees etc. and an abstract about the recording.

To listen to a particular recording, click on the play button near the top of the page but, remember to use headphones so as not to disturb other library users.
To pause play, click on .
Note: copyright laws may prevent you from listening to certain recordings that are held in the collection.

You can create a list of favourite recordings or playlists to listen to later. To do this however, you must first create an account by clicking on Register at the top of the screen.

Using individual databases

You may prefer to access and search databases individually. Although the interfaces are different for each the principles of searching are essentially the same. Apply the skills you have learned in using Discover@Bolton when using other such databases.

Other databases relevant to the Games, Computing and Creative Technologies subject area include:

- British Library Sounds (not included in Discover@Bolton)
- IEEE Xplore (included in Discover@Bolton)
- ProQuest Central (included in Discover@Bolton)
- ScienceDirect (included in Discover@Bolton)
- SCOPUS (included in Discover@Bolton)

For further help with some of these databases see the relevant cribsheets available on the Subject Guide pages relevant to the Games, Computing or the Creative Technologies subject area.
Finally …

This guide is only an introduction to electronic databases. Remember there are various resources available via relevant subject guides to help with your research.

If you require further help searching databases contact your librarian, Steve Crimes:

Tel: 01204 903093
Email: s.crimes@bolton.ac.uk

If you require immediate help during Library opening hours:

Tel. 01204 903232
Email subjecthelp@bolton.ac.uk