5

LITERATURE SEARCHING

In Chapter 4, I emphasized the importance of accurate referencing. Now, if your references are in good shape and if you have begun to establish an easy-to-manage system of cross-referencing, your hard work will be rewarded. If you are also familiar with one of the online search tools such as EndNote, you are likely to have a head start in the literature searching trail. However, even with these advantages, you will still need to develop a search strategy and to acquire search skills so that, as far as possible, you are able to identify only those items which relate directly to your topic and which eliminate the many thousands which do not.

The library search

If you are involved in a 100-hour project, be realistic. You are working to a very limited time scale, so start with what is available in your own library. Remember to ask if there are specialist librarians in your own area of study because if there are, they can save you many hours of fruitless searching. I hope I am right in assuming that you will already be familiar with the layout of the library and will already have consulted your **library catalogue** and the **library web page**. If not, make sure you do. Library web pages vary, as always, but the best give information about

passwords, IT support, information about the databases and journals to which your university, college or organization subscribes, copyright regulations relating to the use of electronic resources and off-site use. Regardless of the size of your investigation, never overlook what your home institution can provide.

Books

Head for the stacks, scan the book titles in and around your topic area and if you see anything that might be of interest, find a chair and a table and set to work. Examine the contents lists. Book titles can be misleading, but the contents lists will give you a good idea of what the books are really about and the language used. Take a quick look at any chapters which might be relevant to your topic, examine the index and the list of references for each book. Photocopying facilities are generally available in libraries, for a fee, so buy a photocopying card, if that is the system in use in your library. Read the copyright regulations which are usually kept somewhere close to the photocopier. If you have any doubts about the regulations, consult library staff about what you can and cannot do, what is legal and what is not.

Photocopy the list of references/bibliographies at the end of books and chapters which seem to be of interest and flag or highlight any items which you think might need to be followed up at a later stage. These lists can often provide invaluable additional sources. Some researchers file the photocopies and only record highlighted items if they decide to consult chapters or books some time later. I'm a compulsive recorder and I add all highlighted items to my cards immediately and then transfer them to my biographical list as soon as I can. If you carry a laptop around with you all the time, you can record them on the spot and, as my colleagues repeatedly tell me, then you don't waste time by doing the job twice.

Note possible **keywords** *and* add a note to remind you where you found the book (library classification number, floor and shelf number, main library or annexe, in another library, another country – anything which will help you to find it again).

Journals

Your library catalogue will include a list of journals to which your institution subscribes. Journals are expensive, regardless of whether they are on library shelves or only available in electronic format. Either way, the library has to pay and as costs of books and subscriptions to online materials accelerate, many institutions have to make decisions about what they can afford.

There are hundreds and hundreds of journals and it can be difficult to know which are likely to produce the most useful information, but all disciplines have a core of 'quality' journals which include nationally or even internationally refereed articles. Researchers will often begin their search with this elite group. However, that is not to say that they are the only ones worth consulting. There are many others which might be equally useful, so ask your supervisor and fellow students about likely titles, check whether they are available in print format and, if so, once again head for the stacks.

As with books, look at the list of contents at the front (or sometimes at the back) of the journals, read abstracts at the start of articles and make a note of any interesting items and possible keywords. Take a photocopy of lists of references and, if copyright conditions permit, of any articles which are related to your topic – *and*, as with books, add a note to indicate where the journal was located.

When you reach the stage of deciding you have probably done as much as you can for the time being on library searching, go through the lists of references again. If you discover that the same research is cited time and time again in different books or articles, it seems reasonable to conclude that it is regarded by other researchers as being of quality and worth consulting, even if it is twenty or thirty years old. Resources over ten or more years old are not always included on the Web, so ask the library staff whether copies are still kept in the library and if so, where. Quite often, journals older than three or four years are removed from the shelves but that does not necessarily mean they have been destroyed. One library I often use keeps up to ten years of copies somewhere in the nether regions of the library and another hires a warehouse for older stock. Students (and

staff) then have to place an order for the required books or journals.

All is not lost if your library does not hold the items you need, because it might be possible to ask for copy of a book on inter-library loan from another library or to obtain a photocopy of the journal articles you need – sometimes for a fee. Library staff will know what services are available and how to get hold of what you want, so ASK.

Computer literature searching



It always helps to be a computer wizard, but it's still perfectly possible to carry out a computer literature search even though you may consider yourself to be technologically challenged. Take advantage of whatever guidance your supervisor, department, friends or library staff provide about searching. Find out whose job it is to help inexperienced computer literature searchers and always ask for help if you are stuck. Don't suffer in silence and never believe you are the only one who appears to be incapable of solving all search problems ten minutes after sitting down at a computer. You won't be. Many libraries provide courses on computer literature searching where you will be able to try out approaches and ask any questions. No matter how pressed for time you are, make sure you attend – even if you come into the wizard category. Literature searching involves special techniques and know-how and before you can begin to think about starting your search, you have some work to do.

Passwords, usernames and working from home

In many computer literature searches, you will need a **password** or **passwords**, **username** and sometimes, **authorization codes**, particularly if you wish to gain access to full-text items. Passwords may be allocated automatically by the library, your department, your departmental IT officer and/or computer centres, but practices vary, so if nothing is said or done, ask in the library about who issues what.

You may find you need more than one password and username in order to be able to access some of the databases you need. For example, many large libraries subscribe to the ATHENS system which is designed to simplify database access for higher education students and which requires specific ATHENS passwords and usernames. Library staff will give you information about how to obtain them.

If you wish to work from home or from a different country, your passwords and username may give you the same access as if you were working in your main library, but not always. You may need new passwords and authorization codes or, as I mentioned in Chapter 4, you may even need an off-site licence. Your institution may or may not pay for the licence so, as always, ask library staff or the computer/IT officer in your department what has to be done.

Search engines

If any 'How to . . .' or 'Easy Searching Guides' are available in the library, they will take you step by step through the requirements of some of the search engines and databases to which your institution subscribes. Study the instructions, keep them to hand for further reference and add them to the 'Favourites' list on your computer so that you can refer to them in future rather than typing in the webpage address (URL) every time. However, even with the assistance of such guides, at some stage you may need to consult other search engines in order to obtain access to a wider range of materials.

Search engines trawl very large numbers of databases, looking for sources which mention your keywords/index terms/phrases and which provide access to thousands of web sites, a few of which are listed at the end of this chapter. They will vary in quality and in content and it can take time to try out several so ask your supervisor, friends, fellow students and specialist librarians which, in their view, are the most user friendly.

It's possible to obtain information on just about anything through the Internet, ranging from where to buy a hat to how to find a six-bedroom house in central London. At present, I am not

in the market for either but if ever I were, I might well log on to Google (http://www.google.com/) which happens to be my first-choice search engine and I'm sure it will provide me with all the information I need. However, the problem with these huge databases is that there can be too much information for our purposes and the time taken to sift findings can be considerable.

Literature searchers have been using Google for many years, but now, the development of Google Scholar (http:/www.scholar.google.com/) is proving to be a considerable bonus for academic users. It follows the Google format by allowing us to search by keyword, subject or author and contains an extensive range of peer-reviewed papers, information about theses, reports, books and citations (the number of times an item is cited in other publications). I like books, to be able to handle books and read them in bed so I rather like the information that if I wish to consult a particular book, Google Scholar will tell me which libraries in Britain stock it.

Search tools

Irritatingly, search engines are a law unto themselves. Some will accept Boolean operators (AND, OR and NOT) between each keyword or phrase but many do not. If you undertake a Google search, you will be told that 'The "AND" operator is unnecessary – we include all search terms by default'. Other search engines just ignore them or may require a comma, brackets, question marks, plus and minus signs – or something else. A question mark can sometimes replace a single letter so that WOM?N will find 'woman' or 'women'. Depending on the search engine, an asterisk placed in the middle of a word (middle truncation) will deal with different spellings, as in COL*R, which will find 'color' and 'colour'. This may seem to be unnecessary, but remember that your keyword wording has to be precise and if you are searching an American database, 'colour' may not be recognized. If the asterisk is placed at the end of a word (right truncation), as in CHILD*, then 'child', 'children' and 'childhood' will be found.

The problem is that search engines and databases may use all, some or none of the above operators. Fortunately, on-screen help,

the database helpline, fellow students who are skilled searchers and your library 'How to . . .' leaflets will generally let you know what is required. If not, then I'm afraid it is a case of trial and error.

Devising a search strategy

When the first edition of this book was published in 1987, relatively few researchers were skilled in computer searches. Now, many will regard the World Wide Web as their first and sometimes only line of inquiry. However, the basic procedures involved in literature searching are much the same now as they were in 1987, namely defining the parameters of the study and refining and focussing keywords which will allow you to identify relevant sources and, if possible, to eliminate most of the irrelevancies.

Defining the parameters of your search (search limiters)

Ask yourself the following questions:

1 *Are you only interested in materials in English?* Do you want worldwide sources or UK or . . .? Take care. Be realistic. If you ask for too much at the start of your search, you may be overwhelmed by the amount of material you identify.
2 *Do you want information about literature from 1800 to the present day?* You don't have unlimited time on a 100-hour study, nor on a much larger investigation, so *for a start*, start small. Limit yourself to what has been published in the past 5 or 10 years and only look earlier when you need more information or when your supervisor says you should expand your search. Not all supervisors agree with the 5–10 years suggestion. Two experienced supervisors of scientific research who read drafts of this chapter made it clear that even in a short project, they would expect researchers to cover a wider range of literature. They pointed out that if researchers ignored earlier quality research and what they described as 'standard texts', they would not be in a position to present a balanced picture of the development of knowledge in their topic area over a period of

time. I understand their concerns. In a large investigation such as a PhD, researchers will almost always be required to produce a full literature review but the amount of time a 100-hour researcher has to spend on searching is necessarily very limited, so ask your supervisor for guidance about literature review requirements. Try not to close the literature search door too soon, but always keep a check on the amount of time you allow for searching and do your best not to exceed it.

3 *Where do you plan to concentrate your study?* Hospitals, schools, universities, colleges, prisons, adult education centres? Try including your location in your keywords and see what is produced.
4 *Are you only interested in one discipline area?* If you are only concerned with barriers to learning for mature students in nursing, it might be reasonable to include 'nursing' in your keywords.
5 *Do you wish to identify only research carried out in Scotland, Singapore, Australia, the USA – or worldwide?* Does it matter?
6 *Does it matter whether members of your sample are in higher education or not?* If it's of no concern where they are, leave 'higher education' out of your keywords.
7 *Have you thought about alternative terminology?* Your keywords are 'mature students', 'barriers (to learning)' and 'higher education'. In computer searches, database indexers may not use the same terminology or spelling as you so make a list of synonyms and alternatives. Consult a dictionary and a thesaurus such as *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases*. Sometimes, databases actually provide a thesaurus which enables you to adopt the keywords used in the database. If so, use it.

Individual and grouped keywords

Your purpose in conducting the literature search is not to identify sources which relate specifically to each of your keywords in turn because what you really want to discover is whether mature students (or older students) in higher education (or universities, or colleges) experience any barriers (or hurdles) which impede their learning (or success) and that means you have to include all keywords in your search request.

Some search engines may accept phrases; others will not, but before you become too tied down to focussing on your particular requirements, see what two of the very large search engines make of your topic title. Start with Yahoo (http://search.yahoo.com/). Key in 'barriers to learning for mature students in higher education'. You are told there are 57,900 results and clearly more focussing is required (numbers may change on different dates, but this at least gives an idea of the number of findings which are likely to be identified from the topic title on any date).

If you do the same with Google Scholar (http://www.scholar.google.com/) you discover there are 4,500 results. Far more promising, but still a very large number. Note the URL and add it to the 'Favourites' list in your computer so you can find it again, if necessary. Scroll down a few pages, make a note of anything which might possibly be worth following up, but don't get carried away.

Copyright and licensing restrictions

It's always helpful to skim through complete articles and reports to see if they are as useful as they appear to be *but* if you want to download web pages to a file and to use extracts from them at a later date you have to be really careful about copyright and licensing restrictions. Database helplines should inform you what you can download, print and use, and what you can't. If they don't, and if you have any doubts, ask for help from your supervisor and/or specialist librarian. Some institutions' web pages provide fairly full statements about what in legal terms is 'fair dealing' and what is not, so it's worth while seeing if yours is one of them. It's very easy now to cut and paste from web pages and I imagine we all do it from time to time, *but* if you are careless and fail to give full details of where items come from, when they were retrieved and whose words you are pasting into your own records, you could be in real trouble because you could find yourself involved in a plagiarism case. These days, plagiarism is a disciplinary issue in institutions of higher education and this could be very serious indeed. In the past, I think some researchers were caught in this particular spider's web because of genuine

ignorance rather than deliberate attempts at deceit but now, so many verbal and printed warnings are given to students that institutions have little patience with the 'Well, I didn't know that was wrong' excuse. *So take care*.

Focusing your keywords

In the early stages of your search, you can't afford to spend too much time scrolling down very large numbers of pages, so begin to focus your requirements more sharply to eliminate more of the irrelevant items. Look back at the 'Defining the parameters' section and check whether you are clear about your answers to each item. Sometimes, if you are not finding useful results, it might be advisable to try alternative keywords. What about 'hurdles' instead of 'barriers to learning'? You might also have decided that 'higher education' wasn't important but 'post-graduate' might be, so see what Google Scholar makes of 'students+hurdles+postgraduate+nursing'. Now, you discover that only 26 results are found and even those of you who are working on 100-hour projects can probably find time to scroll down all 26 pages. You find there are some likely sources, but as usual, only two lines are provided for each item and it's difficult to know whether they are really useful until you've seen the full text. You may be able to 'View as HTML' and if you decide to follow this route, you will be directed to the materials you need to consult. Some will give you free access to full texts but others will require a password or even involve a fee. If some items relate to journal articles, the name of the journals are generally given. Make a note of them and later, see if they are available on the library shelves or in electronic format. A word of warning here. Some web sites won't let you go back, so experienced Internet searchers tell me they open web links in a new window to keep track of findings. Others have different systems, so ask around. Find out which approach computer wizard fellow students adopt and ask how they keep their web records so they can speedily refer back to them and go from one to another when necessary.

Time – yet again!

Sorry to repeat myself, but literature searching and particularly computer searching can become compulsive and easily overlap into the time allocated for other essential tasks, so at some stage you have to tell yourself that 'Enough is enough for the time being. Get on with the rest of the research'. No prevaricating. Be disciplined and remember that you can't search for ever and you can't know everything, even if you are working on a very large investigation.

The critical examination of evidence



As far as possible, it is your job as a researcher to consider the worth of the research you have identified in your searches. Ask yourself whether, in your opinion, it was well designed and whether the data-collecting instruments were suitable for the purpose. In Chapter 7, Brendan Duffy reminds us, amongst other things, that 'writers will rarely declare their assumptions so it is the task of the researcher to expose them if possible. Ask yourself whether there are any signs of bias and partisanship.' He asks 'Does the evidence supplied convincingly support the author's arguments?' He was writing about the analysis of documentary evidence, but his advice is equally valid in considering the worth of research reports. Of course, it's not always easy to answer his questions. We may have few problems about identifying obvious signs of bias in another researcher but we need to be equally watchful about our own. For example, we may agree so strongly with an author's conclusions that we fail to question whether those conclusions are fully justified. Then there is the problem about insufficient information on which to make a judgement. If you are carrying out all your searches on the Web, you may find that information about research design is not always provided in sufficient detail. All you can hope to do is to examine reports of research as thoroughly and objectively as time and your impartiality allow.

To conclude



I can't emphasize enough the importance of using the facilities provided by your own institution. For example, as long as you have a password and username, it's usual for large academic libraries to give free on-site access to Internet resources, and to the search engines, databases and full-text e-journals to which they subscribe. If you know you are not a sophisticated Internet user, remember to ask what skills training and IT support are available and if the response is 'None', then ask someone else, because not everyone knows what is on offer.

Institution web pages are almost always kept up to date, so check every time you log in, in case any changes have been made to regulations and availability of services.

Top ten guide to searching the Internet



A few weeks ago I asked Katie Horne, a friend and professional researcher, if she had any particular tips on literature searching. She consulted her colleagues and together they came up with the following Top Ten Guide to Searching the Internet (Horne 2004), which acts here as a summary for the chapter instead of the usual checklist. In item 7, you will see that she urges us to take steps to avoid spam. I never thought of that, so it just shows that you can always learn something useful by talking to other people!

1 Give yourself plenty of time. It isn't called the World Wide Web for nothing! There are massive quantities of information and massive amounts of blind alleys and it is important to allocate enough time for the search within the project plan. Conversely, it is also important to set yourself a limit. Web searching can be addictive and it is difficult to know where to draw the line. Although there may be some sites you wish to return to throughout the project to check for updates it is important that you keep web searching in proportion with the other aspects of your literature review.

2 Be optimistic! Start by typing in exactly what you are looking for e.g. 'barriers to learning for mature students in higher education'. You might get lucky, and if not, it can often be interesting to see what the search engine thinks is relevant.
3 Be prepared with search limiters. Before you start, think about how you are going to frame your search just as you would with a journal search. What other search terms could be used e.g. 'adult participation in learning'? Think through whether you want to limit your search to UK sites only (most search engines will let you specify this). It is also worth setting yourself parameters in terms of the age of articles referenced or the sector.
4 Know your search engines. Different search engines have different sponsored links so it is important to try a variety. Amongst the best known are Google and Yahoo but there are several others. There are also specialist sites such as Google Scholar so it is worth spending some time to see which of these sites is bringing up the most relevant hits for your search.
5 When you find something don't lose it! It is worth writing down the exact URL of the page you have found as sometimes a lot of time can be wasted trying to retrace your steps, especially as links from search engines change depending on the number of hits sites get and new sites being created. Making a note of the site may not always be enough though, as sometimes web sites are so complicated it can be difficult to relocate the exact page you were looking for. You can save web pages as well which is also a handy way of making the information available off line. Try to get in the habit of opening web links in a new window as some sites won't let you go back.
6 Don't underestimate the news. Sites such as the Guardian and the BBC have dedicated education and other specialist sections. Not only can these provide current stories which can help to bring your research right up to date; they will also contain links to any reports referenced or to relevant organizations.
7 Avoid spam. Many sites will ask you to register before you can access information, in many cases just to help them by

monitoring who is using their site. Registering will often mean entering your email address and unfortunately this can mean your name gets onto email lists and you will start receiving spam emails. One way to get round this is to set up a dedicated email address for your research at one of the free sites such as Yahoo and Hotmail. This way you can monitor the address for useful emails and then close the account once you have finished so you don't receive unwanted emails to your main address.

8 Networking – the old-fashioned type. Your best route to finding the most relevant sites and search engines is to talk to your contacts. See what search engines your colleagues recommend or if they have stumbled over any relevant web sites. With so many routes to accessing information, word of mouth can save a lot of time but don't just limit yourself to other people on your course. It is worth speaking to anyone who uses the Internet on a regular basis.

9 Referencing. With the increased use of cutting and pasting directly from the Internet it can be difficult to keep track of where information is coming from so whenever you paste information, paste the weblink too. It is worth pointing out you will also need to reference the exact time and date you accessed the site because of the transient nature of Internet content.

10 Patience and persistence! The Web is an invaluable tool for researchers because of the vast amount of information available. It is also an incredibly frustrating tool because of the vast amount of broken links and, in all honesty, rubbish that is out there. Web searching can be very frustrating and often feels like searching for a needle in a haystack but once you find that needle, everything becomes worthwhile.

Electronic sources of information



The World Wide Web contains millions of items of information and therein can lie the problem. You are not interested in millions. Only those which relate to your topic. The following web page addresses (URLs) may give you a start if you are new to

online searching, but as I've said earlier in this chapter, ask friends, colleagues, your supervisor and your specialist librarian which search engines and databases are likely to provide user-friendly access to the information you need.

Search engines

Remember that your search engine and/or database helpline can often give useful tips on shortcuts, so use both wherever possible.

1 **Google** is said to be the most popular search engine in use today (http://www.google.com/) and many literature searchers have depended on it for years. However, the development of **Google Scholar** has been a valuable addition for academics. Unless you are advised otherwise, you might wish to try this first via http://www.scholar.google.com/. It includes useful sections on 'Frequently asked questions' under the headings of 'Searching and indexing', 'Accessing and citing' and 'About Google Scholar' (http://scholar.google.com/scholar/about.html). Well worth consulting.
2 **Yahoo** (http://search.yahoo.com/) is another very large search engine which seems fairly easy to use and which accepted our keywords without difficulty.
3 **AltaVista** (http://www.altavista.com), like Google, Google Scholar and Yahoo, contains millions of pages. I didn't find the helpline as helpful as some of the others but the searches seem to produce reasonable results. We are told that if we enter www.altavista.com into the browser, this clever search engine will know we're in the UK and will 'serve us' www.altavista.co.uk. This 'provides local content' and allows us to search the UK Web in English. That seems to be quite useful and if we plan to get everything from everywhere, we can always click the Worldwide button below the search box.
4 **Metacrawler** (http://www.metacrauler.com) is 'meta' because it allows us to search different search engines and databases – and to select which to use. It's busy though and I find it quite complicated. However, don't listen to me. I'm no computer wizard.

Internet gateways

These are directories or catalogues which select and evaluate sites and arrange resources in a systematic way, rather like a library. They provide alphabetical and annotated sources under your specified headings which is helpful because this can give you ideas about which aspect of your topic might be worth pursuing.

The **Social Science Information Gateway (SOSIG)** (http://sosig.ac.uk/) is a useful gateway which identifies good quality sites in Social Science, Education and Research Methods. Sources are contributed by librarians and subject specialists.

Databases, books, journal articles (and a few other resources)

1 The *Index to Theses with Abstracts Accepted for Higher Degrees by the Universities of Great Britain and Ireland*, is in print and also online at http://www.theses.com/.
2 **Whitaker's** *Books in Print* is generally available for consultation in the reference section of libraries but can also be searched via http://www.whsmith.co.uk/uhs/Go.asp This was formerly via the Internet Book Shop but if you try the Internet Book Shop (http://www.bookshop.co.uk) you will be referred to the W H Smith webpage.
3 **REGARD** is the Economic and Social Research Council database containing information funded by the ESRC and accessed online via http://www.regard.ac.uk/.
4 **ERIC US Department of Education** is a huge education database which can be accessed direct at http://www.eric.ed.gov or via OCLC FirstSearch (http://www.oclc.org/support/documentation/firstsearch/databases/dbdetails/details/ERIC.htm). It includes indexes, abstracts, conference proceedings, reports and many of the journals listed in the *British Education Index*. I have found their online thesaurus very useful, amongst other things in reminding me about the various differences between English and American spelling. You will need an ATHENS password and username.

5 **WorldCat** is also accessed via OCLC FirstSearch (http://www.oclc.org/firstsearch/content/worldcat/default.htm). This is an amazing database of several million bibliographic records contributed by 50,540 libraries. It includes full text electronic books and journals, webpage articles and audio and video recordings. It can even tell you about collections in your own library. It's amazing.
6 **Journal articles** are likely to produce more up-to-date references than books and if for any reason you can't find what you are looking for from WorldCat, you could go to http://www.scre.ac.uk/is/webjournals.html and see what is on offer. Some publishers and information providers will give you free access to the full text of articles.
7 **Statistical database on education and literacy worldwide**, based on UNESCO figures is available via http://www.unesco.org/en/about
8 **UK Official Statistical Publications** are available at the Office for National Statistics web site at http://www.statistics.gov.uk/
9 **Department for Education and Science (DFES)** statistics may be accessed via http://www.dfes.gov.uk/index.htm
10 **The Stationery Office** (http://www.tso.co.uk/) includes the full text of some official documents.

Libraries

1 **Academic libraries' conditions of use throughout the UK** can be found by checking individual library web sites via The University of Wolverhampton UK Sensitive Map located at http://.scit.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo/uk.map.html. This gives free access to information about individual libraries in higher education in the UK and to their catalogues. This is particularly useful for those of you who do most of your searching away from your main campus, and who hope to be given access to a library nearer home. It gives useful information about what specialist stock is held and even provides details about opening and closing times in term time or during

vacations. Best to check before you go though in case the rules have changed.

2 **Public library catalogues**. Many public libraries have their catalogues online and holdings can be checked at http://dialspace.dial.pipex.com/town/square/ac940.
3 **COPAC** (Consortium of University Research Libraries Online Public Access Catalogue) via http://copac.ac.uk/copac gives access to the catalogues of the largest university research libraries in the UK and Ireland.
4 **The British Library Online Public Access Catalogue** holds almost 10 million records of material, including books, journals and conference proceedings in the Humanities (1975–), Science, Technology and Business (1974–), Retrospective (Pre-1975), Music (1980–) and Music (Pre- 1981). It also has links to environmental, healthcare and social sciences. Perhaps rather more than we shall need for our research, but real riches are here. Access is now free online via http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/blpc and is available 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

Citations and references

In Chapter 4, I mentioned that when sources were referred to (that is 'cited') in the text of your report, the full details must be given in your list of references or in your bibliography. A bibliography in this sense would include all, or at least many of the sources you consulted during the course of your research whereas a list of references at the end of your report would include every source you cited. A bibliography is not generally required in research reports but follow the procedures recommended by your institution and department.

1 Providing full details of books, journal articles and chapters in books is straightforward enough once you know how, but knowing how to reference material from newspapers, the World Wide Web, the Internet, online journals, radio reports and a good many other information sources can be more problematic. If you are drawing on any of these sources, it will

be as well to check with 'Cite Them Right' at http://www.unn.ac.uk/central/isd/cite/.

2 **Web of Knowledge (WoK)** is hosted by MIMAS (http://www.mimas.ac.uk/) run by Manchester Computing at The University of Manchester. It includes three very large databases, namely the Science Citation Index, the Social Sciences Citation Index and the Arts and Humanities Citation Index. If you are a member of a UK higher education or further education institution, you are entitled to obtain access to most MIMAS services free of charge. You may need to register online with your ATHENS password and username to search most sites and some are only available via site subscription.

   You can search by topic, place, person or full search. Indexes, references or citations that are listed at the end of journal articles are included.

   MIMAS provides a helpdesk service (by telephone on 0161 275 6109 (ask for ISI Web of Knowledge support) or by email at wok@mimas.ac.uk.

3 **EndNote**: www.endnote.com (manuals are usually available for consultation in your library). Your academic library may have purchased a site licence for EndNote, Reference Manager and/or Pro-Cite and one or all will usually be available at PC centres for on-campus use. As I mentioned in Chapter 4, it may be possible for you to purchase an off-site student licence in order to be able to use the software at home. Your library, computer centre or IT department will give you advice and, I hope, support and training, if necessary.

Health and ethics



1 **Royal College of Nursing (RCNONLINE):** www.rcn.org.uk.

2 **Health Education Research** is a journal published by Oxford University Press assisted by Stanford University Library's High Wire Press. Allows you to search for articles and to browse the archive via http:/www.her.oupjournals.org/.

3 **Department of Health research and development** includes information of interest to researchers and to public health and

social care workers, via http://www.doh.gov.uk/research/index.htm.

4 **Department of Health statistics** may be found at http://www.doh.gov.uk/public/stats1.htm.

5 *The Caldicott Report: Report on the Review of Patient-identifiable Information*. December 1997, Department of Health. Recommendations may be seen via http://www.doh.gov.uk/ipu/confiden/report/recs.htm.

6 *Data Protection Act 1998: An Introduction*. The home page is available at: http://www.doh.gov.uk/ipu/confiden/report/report/recs.htm

7 *Ethical Principles for Conducting Research with Human Participants* published by the British Psychological Society (BPS), is available at http://bps.org.uk/documents/code/pdf. This is particularly useful in relation to consent and confidentiality.