Searching for journal articles using ProQuest

To find relevant journal articles for an assignment, you need to identify **keywords** from your topic that you can use in a **journal database**.

Let’s have a look at how to find journal articles using the example assignment question below:

*Discuss the development of higher education in China over the last 5 years.*

To find the best databases for your topic, have a look at the Library’s **Subject Resource Guides**. The guides are accessed from the **Library home page**:

newcastle.edu.au/library

- Click on **Subject Resource Guides** (located under the **ACCESS** heading).

You should now see an alphabetical list of subjects where you can choose the most relevant subject area for your topic. For this example we will choose **Education**.

- Select **Education** from the list.

You will now see a guide which will help you find the best resources for research in the field of **education**.
Each database differs in its content and coverage, so you may need to search more than one to find exactly what you need. For this example, we will use the ProQuest databases.

- Click on **ProQuest databases**.

- You may need to enter your **student number** and **password** to access the database.

The best way to search ProQuest is by using the **Advanced search** option. If the **Basic search** screen displays, click on **Advanced search**.
You now need to enter your **keywords** into the search boxes as shown below.

Keywords can be searched as **phrases** by using **quotation marks** around your terms. Phrase searching limits the number of results you retrieve and makes your search more specific. Click on the **Search tips** option for more help with searching ProQuest effectively.

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**NB:** It is **not recommended** to tick the Full text box as this will limit your search too much. Have a look at the information on **page 6** of this handout for an alternative method of searching for the full text article when only an abstract (summary) is displayed in the database.

For our example assignment question, you would need to search within the last 5 years of research. To do this:

- Click **After this date...** from the Publication date field, then
- Enter **2012** in the box as shown below.

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- Click **Search** to retrieve a list of results.
Refining your Search Results

You can refine your results further by selecting some of the options on the left-hand side of the screen.

For example:

- Click **Subject**.
- Click **More options**... to see the complete list of subjects for your topic.

- Tick the **Include** box for any subject which is applicable to your research. You can select more than one, as shown below:

- Click **Apply**
Understanding your Search Results

Scroll through the list of results and identify relevant articles.

If you retrieve too few or no results, or if your results are not relevant to your topic, you will need to revise your search terms. Try using a thesaurus to help you think of alternative keywords to use in your search, or use the Other searches to try option, located at the bottom of the page.

- Click on Preview to display the abstract of an article.

Click on Full text - PDF to display the whole article. You can then save, print, or email the article.

NB: Other options such as Link to Full Text, Full text, and Access full text also give you access to the full text article.

My Research

Relevant articles can be saved to My Research. You will need to create a free account to use My Research. Your account will give you access to Saved Documents, Saved Searches, and other ProQuest research tools.

- Select the articles you wish to keep by ticking the box next to the required reference, then click on Selected items.
- Click on **Save** and then select **Save to My Research**.

![Selected items](image)

- Sign in to **My Research** and then click on **Save**.

![Save to My Research](image)

You will now be able to access your articles whenever you are using ProQuest.

**No Full Text?**

Sometimes a database will only provide an **abstract** and not the **full text** (whole document) of a relevant article. When this happens, make a note of the details of the reference (journal name, volume/issue number, year etc.). Then, search the **Library Catalogue (NewCat+)** for the **journal title** to see if the Library has full text access to the journal in another database. Sometimes the journal may also be held by the Library in print (paper version).

Let’s try searching for the following journal article.

**Measuring China’s innovative capacity: a stochastic frontier exercise**
From the Library home page, type the journal name into the NEWCAT+ search box and click.

The first result in the list is the print version of the journal; the second result is the online version (EJOURNAL).

Check the reference from the database and compare it with the ejournal record in the Library Catalogue to see if the Library has access to the specific journal issue you need.

The article you are looking for was published in 2013, so you need to click on the Taylor & Francis Online link. This will take you to the journal.

Scroll down the page and find Volume 22 2013. You now need to click on the volume number to open the list of issue numbers.
• Click on Issue 2 to view the contents page of all the articles published in this issue.

• Scroll through the list of articles until you find the one required (they are usually listed in page number order).

• To access the full text of the article, click on PDF.