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Finding PhD Dissertations and Theses

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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Skills@Library Teaching Materials:

Finding PhD Dissertations and Theses

Aims

This workbook is split into three parts and each part contains a number of tasks and activities that will introduce you to how to search for dissertations and theses. By the end of this workbook you will be able to:

- Search for and access University of Leeds theses
- Select and search a range of databases and resources to find UK and international theses
- Use a database to find references to theses on topics or subject areas of interest
- Perform searches of the databases using simple and advanced searching features
- Save your search results for future reference
- Obtain the full text of theses

About this workbook

Things that you need to type are displayed in **`Courier New bold`** font.
Instructions assume that you are using the Internet Explorer browser (the ISS-supported web browser), but you can use any web browser.

Part 1: Searching for a University of Leeds thesis

The Library holds a copy of all PhD theses and some Masters theses awarded by the University. They are mostly kept in store rooms, indicated under **Location** on the Library Catalogue. If you wish to see a copy of a thesis, you can request it online via the '**In store (stcem) – request here'** link in the Library Catalogue. An increasing number of theses are available online through the Catalogue.

1. Searching for a University of Leeds thesis when you know the author or title

Exercise 1: Finding a University of Leeds thesis when you know the author or title

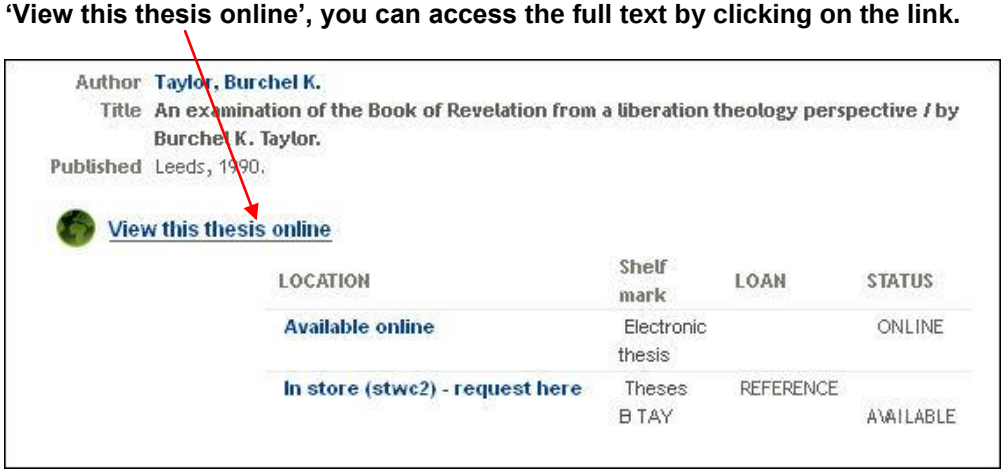
You can carry this out in the same way as any other Author or Title search in the Library Catalogue. Some theses might be marked in the Catalogue as "Not available for consultation" or "Not available for consultation until (a specific date)". This could be because the research is commercially sensitive or to protect confidentiality.

1. Go to the Library Catalogue: http://lib.leeds.ac.uk//

2. Choose **AUTHOR** search from the drop-down menu on the left. Type: **`Taylor, Burchel`** and click on the **Search** button.
Or
If you know the title, you can choose **TITLE** search, and type the title, e.g. `An examination of the Book of Revelation from a liberation theology perspective.`

Note where the thesis is located and whether it is available for consultation. You can request to see a print copy of a thesis by clicking the link **In store (stwc2) - request here**.

Please note: An increasing number of theses from York, Sheffield and Leeds are being added to our White Rose Etheses online repository. Links to Leeds theses are currently being added to the catalogue records. If you see the link 'View this thesis online', you can access the full text by clicking on the link.



2. Searching for a University of Leeds thesis on a particular subject

A keyword search will look in all parts of the catalogue record, so it may be that items are found that are not theses themselves, but which contain the word 'theses' somewhere in the record.

Exercise 2: Finding a University of Leeds thesis on a particular subject

1. Choose **KEYWORD** from the drop-down menu.

2. Type **`theses bible`** into the search box and click on the **Search** button.

A list of records containing the word “theses” and the word “bible” will be displayed. Click on one of the entries. The search terms will be shown highlighted. Note where the thesis is located, and whether it is available for consultation.

3. Searching for a University of Leeds thesis from a particular department

It is possible to search for theses from a particular University department. Be aware that some departments may have had more than one name during their history, e.g. "Sociology" became "Sociology and Social Policy”.

Exercise 3: Finding a University of Leeds thesis from a particular department

1. Click **Classic Search** at the top left of the page, then select the **Leeds Theses** link from the **Advanced Search Options drop-down menu** on the right hand side of the screen.

2. Type **`theses politics`** in the box.

3. Click on the **Theses search** button and then click on the first entry, **Theses Politics**. This will give you a list of theses from the School. Clicking on the second entry, **Theses Politics and International Studies**, will give you a list of theses from the School since its change of name.

4. Saving your search results

You can **email** copies of records to yourself for future reference by marking records in the list and then exporting them. Try this in the exercise below.

Exercise 4: Saving catalogue search results

1. Mark a record of your choice in the list of results by clicking in the small check box to the left of the title.

2. Click the

link which is just above the item records

3. Then click on the

link just above the search box.

4. On the next screen, select F**ull Display** and type your email address into the **Mail To:** box, then click **Submit**.

Part 2: Searching for theses from other UK institutions

1. Searching for theses using Index to Theses

Index to Theses is a database containing details of PhD and some Masters theses submitted at many UK and Irish universities since 1716. It contains title, author and institution details. Most theses from 1986 onwards have abstracts included; however, some abstracts are available for theses dating from 1970.

Exercise 1a: Accessing the Index to Theses search page

1. Go to the Library Catalogue `http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/`.

2. Choose a **Title** search then type **`Index to theses`** into the Title box. Select **Electronic Resources** from the drop-down menu to the right of the search box and then click on **Search**.

3. Click on the link **Index to theses – Portland Press** in the **Available online** box.

4. On the Index to Theses homepage, click on Search, then click on the Simple Search tab, as this gives you options to build up your search.

Exercise 1b: Searching for theses using Index to Theses

You will now do a search for theses submitted to Birmingham University on the subject of operas.

1. Type `opera*` in the **title contains** box (using truncation of the word **opera*** to include opera, operas and operatic).

2. Select **Birmingham** from the University drop-down menu.

3. Click **start search**.

4. Your search results will appear. **Note that this search will also pick up operator, operational, operant, which do not have any connection with music.**

5. Go back to the search screen by clicking on the back button, and remove opera* from the title box.

6. In the **Abstract contains** search box, enter the word **`opera*`**

7. Select **Birmingham** in the **University** field

8. Select **A4a.Music** in the **Class** field. Leave the **Connect fields** set to AND.

Note that in this case it is important to select Music, because otherwise by truncating opera* you will retrieve thesis titles containing words such as operation, operating, etc. By limiting the results to the subject of music, this problem is minimised.

9. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click on the **Start Search** button.

10. Take a look at a full record for some items in your list by clicking on the blue text link.

11. Click on the browser's **Back** button to return to the list and select another record.

Now try doing some further searches on your own subject using the **simple search**, or explore the **standard search** option, which uses Boolean operators “AND” and “OR”.

2. Saving records from Index to Theses

There is no direct download facility in Index to Theses. You could always consider choosing **Edit>Copy>** and **Paste** into a new Word file. The following exercise suggests another method.

Exercise 2: Saving records from Index to Theses

1. Click on Internet Explorer's browse menu at the top of the screen and choose **File** then **Save As...**.

2. In the new save box, select Text file (*.TXT) (or Plain Text (*.TXT) if offered) from the "**Save as type**" drop down menu.

3. In the "**Save in**" box, choose an area where you would like to save the text file (e.g. on the University network, in your [M:] or to a memory stick).

4. If you really want to save as part of this exercise, finally click on the **Save** button.

You would then be able to open the saved text file using any word processing package (e.g. Microsoft Word) or a text editor (e.g. Notepad) where you can then edit, or print, the text as required.

If at any time the **Save As…** option is greyed out in the menu, right click in the window and, from the menu that appears, choose **Open frame in new window,** then in the new window choose **File** then **Save As…**

3. Obtaining the full text of theses found in Index to Theses

Many full text theses accepted for Doctoral degrees by British universities since the early 1980s are available from the British Library. The British Library has been digitising theses from institutions across the UK and making them openly available online through the British Library's Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS). You need to register to use EThOS as the member of one of the participating universities but its digitised theses can be downloaded free of charge.

Exercise 3: Getting full text theses from Index to Theses

There are three main routes to getting the full text of theses in Index to Theses:

1. **Routes to full text: University**:
In Index to Theses some of the records have a link at the top which says **Routes to full text: University**. This link should take you to the repository of that University and the full text. Not all theses will be available for consultation and not will be available to external users.

2. **Routes to full Text: EThOS**:
Some records have a link to say **Routes to full Text: EThOS.** If the full text is available and you click on this link you will be taken straight to the record in EThOS with a link to the full text (you will still need to register).

If you wish to search for theses in EThOS, follow the instructions below:

1. Go to `http://ethos.bl.uk`

2. In the search EThOS box you can type the title of the thesis, if you know it, or perform a keywords search for full text theses on a topic of interest. Type the keywords `climate change`

3. Tick the box **Limit search to items available for immediate download**

4. Click **Go**

5. You will now see a list of theses that are available for immediate download. To obtain the full text, you must first register and then click, **Choose Pricing/Delivery**, then add to basket and confirm your order. The pricing should say £0.00).

If the full text of a UK thesis is not available in EThOS, you can request a digitised copy to be made. In some cases this is free of charge to you but on occasion you may be asked to pay. It can take some time to digitise the item. The British Library will indicate the estimated digitisation time on each thesis record, as well as their homepage.

3. Document Supply
If you require a UK thesis, not available in EThOS, our document supply service may be able to help. Please note that not all Libraries will lend their theses, document supply can advise you on the likelihood of being able to get hold of a copy for you.

If you still can't get the full text, you could contact the relevant university and organise a visit so you can access the print copy of the theses for reference at least. In most cases you will need a SCONUL access card to visit other university libraries: http://www.access.sconul.ac.uk/

Part 3: Searching for international theses

1. Searching for theses using ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

ProQuest Dissertations and Theses contains details of PhD theses and some Masters theses from over 1,000 institutions across the **United States of America** and **Europe** back to 1861. Abstracts are included from 1980 for PhD theses and from 1988 for Masters theses. A 24-page sample is available for theses from 1997 onwards and there is also the opportunity to buy the full text online, which is a useful option as non-UK theses are often very difficult to obtain.

Exercise 1a: Search for theses using ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

1. Go to the Library Catalogue http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/**.**

2. Choose a **Title** search then type `Proquest dissertations and theses` into the search box and click **Search**.

3. Click on the blue link **ProQuest Dissertations and Theses – ProQuest Databases** underneath the words **Available online**

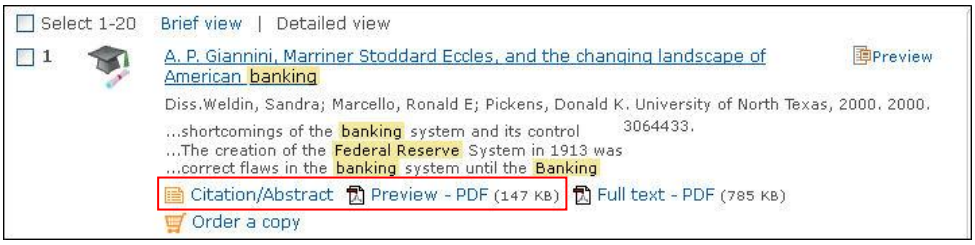
4. If prompted login with your ISS username and password

5. If you can't see a search box, select the **Basic search** link. Type the keywords `federal and reserve and banking` into the search box.

6. Then click on the magnifying glass to search

7. You should now see a list of results.

8. The information available with each record may be different. You may be able to see a citation/abstract or even a preview of the dissertation which may contain the title page, contents page, abstract and the first pages of a chapter.



9. There has been an increase in the number of theses which can be viewed in full text. If you see the link **Full Text – PDF** under a title, you can just click on it to read the entire thesis.

You may find that when you run a search you get too many results to work through. You can narrow your search by using the **Narrow results by** menu to the right of your list of results. This gives you a number of options such as narrowing by language or date.

Another way to narrow your search is by combining searches. In the following exercise, you will combine the previous search terms with new ones.

Exercise 1b: Combining searches

1. Run a new search by typing the phrase **`Bank of England`** into the search box and clicking **search**.

2. Click on the link at the top right of the screen that says: **2 recent searches**; this will take you into a page showing details of your previous search for "federal and reserve and banking" and your last search for "bank of England". Each search has been given a number.

3. Type `1 and 2` into the search box and click on **Search** to perform the search for records matching your first and second search terms.

2. Email/Save/Export records from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

ProQuest Dissertations and Theses allows you to email, print or export the results of your search to software such as EndNote so that you have a copy of the references to any useful-looking dissertations. You can also set up a MyResearch account which will allow you to save individual results as well as saving searches and setting up RSS and email alerts. The next exercise will show you how to email results to yourself.

Exercise 1: Email records from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

1. On the page of results from your last search, click the tick box to the left of the title of the first record.

2. Click the **Email** link to the right of the screen, just above the results, this will open a new box.

3. Type in your name and email address and click on **Send email.**

You can also export your results to EndNote and other reference management software by selecting Export/Save and choosing the appropriate option from the list.

3. Obtaining theses from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses

Requesting a thesis from outside the UK will cost £5.00 per request through the Library's Document Supply service. You can make your request online or ask at a Library Enquiry Desk.
For further details see: http://library.leeds.ac.uk/document-supply

There is an option to buy personal copies of theses from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. This is useful because our Document Supply service cannot usually obtain recent American dissertations (from 2001 onwards), as the British Library no longer purchases all of them.

Purchases can be made by clicking on the **Order a copy** link of a record. This will open a new window and you will be offered a choice of formats from the drop-down menu; the price is calculated on screen. If ordering PDF files, the only payment option is to use a credit card. If you order paper copies or microforms, you can choose to print an order form and send or fax it to ProQuest.

4. Finding full-text electronic theses in other databases

A number of universities worldwide are working together to set up projects to make full text theses available electronically via specially-created websites. This currently includes services such as:

Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD)
Most of the participating universities are in the USA, though initiatives from other countries are now being included.

DART-Europe E-Theses Portal
This portal provides access to **164,539** full-text research theses from 282 universities sourced from 18 European countries.

Australian Digital Theses Program (ADT) Now available through the National Library of Australia, Trove service
The Australian Digital Theses Program provides access to full text electronic versions of a growing collection of postgraduate theses submitted at Australian universities.

Theses Canada Portal
Theses Canada is maintained by the National Library of Canada. It provides free access to approx. 50,000 full text Canadian doctoral theses completed between 1998 and 2002.

Exercise 1: Finding full-text electronic theses in other databases - NDLTD

1. Go to the Library Catalogue http://lib.leeds.ac.uk/.

2. Choose a **Title** search then type **Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations** into the search box and click **Search**.

3. Click on **Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD),** and then click the link to enter the database**.**

4. Under **Search and Browse ETDs – Production Services,** click on the link **VTLS Visualizer**.

5. In the **Search** box, type your search and click on **Search**.

6. A list of search terms will be displayed. Select **view source record** and you will be taken to the site where the full text is available, usually as a PDF.

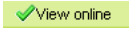
Exercise 4b: Finding full text electronic theses in other databases – **National Library of Australia, Trove service**

1. Go to the **National Library of Australia, Trove service** http://trove.nla.gov.au/

2. To search for theses on a topic type your search into the search box on the homepage

3. Select **Books** and choose the t**hesis** format on the left-hand side

4. Change the 'Sort by' option to Date (latest first) to view the most recently published theses.

5. If the full text is available online you will see a view online button 

. Click this to access the full text

6. If you are searching for a particular thesis just type the title into the search box on the homepage.

To view further information about a thesis on this list, including an abstract, click on the title of the thesis. Full text can be downloaded (options will vary) usually by scrolling to the bottom of the record and selecting the link under **View online**.