Finding Theses

Exercises

Try finding theses related to your research area using one of the platforms below – SOLO, ORA, ProQuest or EThOS and OpenDOAR.

A. Oxford theses

Tip 1: in SOLO go to Advanced Search and select ‘Theses (Oxford)’ under Resource Type.

Use SOLO (http://solo.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/) to search for:

1. Theses in your research area
   - think about your own search string, e.g. find Theses containing the words:
     (youth OR young OR juvenile) AND crim*

2. Theses supervised by your supervisor
   - e.g. Roger Goodman

Tip 2: Find ORA through SOLO’s useful links (or go directly from http://ora.ox.ac.uk/) to find digitised Oxford theses from 2007 onwards.

- Search using All Fields
- Search by using a Keyword e.g. Rowan Douglas Williams. Review your results.
B. British, Irish and Global Theses

ProQuest

Use ProQuest’s *Dissertations and Theses* databases to search for **full-text** and **abstracts** of theses in your research area from the UK, Ireland and globally.

From the Useful links menu on SOLO, select the databases A-Z

1. In the ‘Search for databases’ menu type “dissertations”. Click ‘Go’. View the results.
2. Select ProQuest and Dissertations and Theses Global (full text plus UK and Ireland abstracts).
3. **The default search option is a basic** search. To perform a more effective search, click on **Advanced search** above the search box.
4. Type your own search string into the boxes provided, making sure you use a separate line for each search concept, as demonstrated previously. For example:

   “Asylum seeker*” OR “refugee*”

   child* OR minor? OR juvenile*

   “human rights”

5. The right-hand drop-down menu defaults to search **Anywhere.** If searching the Full-Text database, this also searches the full-text where available. To make your search more focused:
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- Try changing this to **Anywhere except full text – NOFT** for each line.
- Try changing this to **Abstract – AB** for each line.
- Try changing this to **Document title – TI** for each line.

6. You have a range of options to limit your search. Click on ‘Modify search’ to return to the results screen.
   - To filter by a specific thesis supervisor, use the **Advisor** search box, or click on **Look up advisor** for a drop-down list. NB - the advisor search does not work for UK and Irish theses.
   - To restrict results to full-text only, tick the box to **Limit to: Full text**

C. EThOS (optional or for your free time)

**EThOS** ([http://ethos.bl.uk/](http://ethos.bl.uk/)) may have the full text of UK theses. To find a specific thesis, enter the author’s surname and a couple of keywords from the title. However, EThOS has a less sophisticated search engine. For example, the truncation symbol (*) does not work on it. You will therefore need to perform a search using the appropriate **Boolean terms** from the **dropdown menu** on the **advanced search mode** and simplified terms.

E.g.: **Asylum Seeker AND Child**

D. Further practice for your free time - Additional places to look

1. Try out some of the databases listed on Databases A-Z from your results above
2. Go to OpenDOAR [https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/opendoar/](https://v2.sherpa.ac.uk/opendoar/)

   a. Go to the advanced search. Select on 'Content types'→Theses and dissertations. Select ‘Subject’ e.g. History and Archaeology. Browse your results.

   b. Select the Advanced search menu again. Write an organisation name, e.g. Strasbourg (for the University of Strasbourg). Click on ‘Search’. Browse your results. How do they differ from the previous search?

Questions? We are happy to help! Please e-mail pinelopi.flouina@bodleian.ox.ac.uk

*There has been a recent attempt to digitise pre-2007 Oxford theses retrospectively on ORA.*