**Use this template to form a search strategy on the topic you want to research.**

**Step 1:**

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| **Write down the title of your assignment / dissertation / query.** |

**Step 2:**

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| **Now, breakdown your title into separate topics (you may have a few of these).**  **1.**  **2.**  **3.**  **4.** |

**Step 3:**

|  |  |
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| **Make a list of possible keywords for each of your topics. Try and think of plurals, synonyms (different words with the same meaning), and English / American spellings.** | |
| **Topic 1:**  1.  2.  3. | **Topic 2:**  4.  5.  6. |
| **Topic 3:**  7.  8.  9. | **Topic 4:**  10.  11.  12. |

**Step 4:**

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| **Now, combine your keywords using Boolean operators to create a search string.** |
| Topic 1 Topic 2 Topic 3 Topic 4  (1 OR 2 OR 3) AND ( 4 OR 5 OR 6) AND (7 OR 8 OR 9) AND (10 or 11 or 12) |
| **Conduct your search then evaluate your search results and alter your search strategy accordingly.** |
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| **Too many irrelevant matches**  Limit by title, material type, date, language  Use more specific search terms  e.g. dog therapy instead of pet therapy  Add additional concepts to the search  Check any thesaurus facility for preferred terms  Identify any resources that might be more specific to your subject  E.g. a database specific to modern art instead of using general arts, humanities database. | **Too few matches**  Check that all the concepts are essential to your topic. Remove any that are not.  Use broader search terms  e.g. pet therapy instead of dog therapy  Use any citation tracing options  Employ truncation and wildcarding if appropriate  Try a database which has broader scope e.g. one that covers the humanities and not just history. |