The Library

Finding academic information:

Games, Computing and Creative Technologies

Database User Guide
Your guide to finding academic information for
Games, Computing & Creative Technologies

This guide is designed to introduce you to electronic academic databases relevant to Games, Computing & Creative Technologies (GCCT).

What are academic databases?

Online databases contain large amounts of current academic information. They are ideal for researching a topic. The information included is primarily journal articles, but also newspaper articles, theses, conference papers etc. Searching for information is easier using online databases than using printed material.

You should use academic databases rather than search engines such as Google because the material you will find is guaranteed to be reliable and of acceptable academic standard. The databases contain many peer-reviewed journals, this is the top quality academic information, that you should be using for assignments rather than information from websites found via Google.

Which are the most useful databases for your subject?

There are a number of databases listed on the GCCT subject web pages. All contain relevant information but some of the more important ones include:

Important databases:

**British Library Sounds (formerly Archival Sound Recordings)**
Explore over 50,000 selected recordings of music, spoken word, and human and natural environments.

**IEEE Xplore**
This is a large full-text database providing access to IEEE Transactions, IEE Proceedings and other content from the IET. A wide range of topics are covered.

**ProQuest Central**
This is a large multi-disciplinary academic database which covers most aspects of engineering and technology. It consists of a collection of subject specific databases. Many articles are available in full-text but some are available as abstracts only.

**ScienceDirect**
This database provides access to full-text articles from over 2500 Elsevier Science journals in engineering, science and technology.

**SCOPUS**
Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database. It is not subject specific, but includes the broadest coverage of scientific, technical and social science literature. Some articles are full text, some are abstract and references only.
Top Tip

Most suppliers of electronic databases regularly update their interfaces, so the appearance of screens and steps in illustrations may be different to those in this guide, however the instructions for searching the databases will essentially be the same.

Getting started

Load the Library web pages: http://www.bolton.ac.uk/library/

You should now navigate to the Games, Computing & Creative Technologies subject resources page.

The Subject Resources pages

Click on Resources by Subject as shown above then click on Games, Computing & Creative Technologies from the list of subjects. This page displays a list of relevant databases. In addition, take time to have a look at the Internet Resources and Additional Resources tabs.

All of the databases listed may be useful for your research as they cover all aspects of computing including game design, game art, SFX and sound engineering.

Also available on the GCCT subject page and the Library homepage is the search engine Discover@Bolton. This allows you to search some databases and other online resources simultaneously via a single search screen, such as ProQuest Central and ScienceDirect.

Note: Unlike ProQuest Central and ScienceDirect, British Library Sounds, IEEE Xplore and Scopus are not included in Discover@Bolton and so have to be searched independently.
SCOPUS

Scroll down and click on the SCOPUS link. You should now see the University of Bolton’s Electronic Resources Login page. Enter your usual university username and password and then click on Login to access the database.

The home page should now be displayed as shown on the next page.

Searching

There are several ways to search SCOPUS. The option automatically selected is Document search. – or basic search This allows you to search by keyword, author, title or journal name (the default search field option is article title, abstract, keywords).

Before you start your search think about what terms you are going to search for. You should think about any related terms or synonyms you could try in case you don’t find anything the first time.

In the search box, type in your search term and then click on .

Type search term here and then click here
Narrowing your search

If your search has produced a lot of results you will need to narrow it down. There are a number of ways of doing this.

Click on Edit to return to your original search screen. You can now add an additional search term/s to your original. You can combine 2 or more terms by using AND, OR, and NOT.

Alternatively, you can click on at the top of the screen and search within your results by adding another term.

You can also narrow your search by using the ‘Limit’ facility which allows you to restrict results to a particular type of document and year of publication, or a specific range of dates.

You can refine your search even more by selecting one or more of the options listed to the right of your results.

You can chose to either Limit to or Exclude from your results options of your choice such as year of publication, author, subject area, document type, journal title or language etc.
If you want to combine a phrase with a subject word use speech marks, eg, “special effects” AND design.

You can use * to truncate stems of words eg, load* will search for loads, loading, loaded etc. You can also use ? to replace letters within words eg, colo?r will search for both color and colour.

**Top Tip**

If you want to be more specific when searching or perform a more detailed search use ‘Author Search’, ‘Affiliation Search’ or ‘Advanced Search’.

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Looking at your search results

The results are given in brief format which gives the title of the article, author, journal title and year of publication.
To see the abstract which summarizes a particular article, hover over a record title and then click on **Show abstract**. To see further information such as keywords, click on the **article title**.

To display the abstracts of all records click on **Show all abstracts** at top right of screen.

Some of the articles you have retrieved in your search will be available in full text. To find out which are, click on **Link to Full Text** and follow the links, clicking finally on the **PDF** button to display the full text.

However, remember not all articles in SCOPUS are available in full text. If a particular article isn’t, a message will be displayed explaining this. In this case check the Library catalogue to see if the journal is available in print format in the Library. If it isn’t, you can obtain the article by using the Inter-Library Loan service. Please see the link below for full details: 

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**Top Tip**

If you are working from home make sure you have Adobe Acrobat which is required to view pdf documents. If necessary you can download the software free at [http://adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html](http://adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html)

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**Saving, printing and emailing selected search results**

Before you can export, print or email a record or multiple records, you must first mark them and then save them in a folder.

To do this, scroll through your results and mark any useful ones by clicking in the **check box** to the left of a record. You can then either, export, email, print or create a bibliography with your selected results by clicking on **More** at the top of the results screen and selecting an option.

You can save records for future reference by clicking on **More** and then **Add To My List**. You can also set alerts so as to be notified of new material published in your chosen area. To use these facilities however, you must first set up an account.
Top Tip
To browse a particular Subject Area by Source Type, click on **Browse Sources**. This is useful if you want to know if a particular Journal or Conference Proceeding is included in the database. If you need help at any point, click on **Help** and then **Help and Contact** at the top of the screen.

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**IEEE Xplore**

IEEE Xplore is a large, full-text database that provides access to numerous publications and other content including over 170 journals and magazines, 1400 conference proceedings and 5100 standards from both the IEEE and IET. All aspects of computing including game design and computer art, SFX and sound engineering are covered.

At the list of subject databases scroll down and click on **IEEE Xplore**.

**Searching**

In the search box type in your search term and then, click on **SEARCH**.

To narrow your list of results you can add more search terms or use speech marks to combine terms.
In addition, you can narrow by content type such as journals or conference proceedings, limit to a specific date range, author or journal title by ticking the relevant check box to the left of your results.

You can also limit results to material contained within the University’s subscription by selecting **My Subscribed Content** in the **Show box**.

Once you have selected options to refine a search click on **Apply Refinements**.

You can sort your results by year of publication – most recent first or oldest first – or publication by title by selecting from the option box above your list of results.

To see the abstract of an article, click on **Abstract** and then **View more**.

To see the full text of a record, click on **(4456 Kb)**.
As you look at your results, you can mark any useful ones by clicking in the check box next to the record. You can then either download the selected records for export to bibliographical software or for printing.

You can save searches, documents or other items you find on IEEE Xplore which can be accessed later. You can also set alerts so you can be notified of new material published in your chosen area. To use these facilities however, you must first create an account by clicking on Create Account on the top toolbar.

Don’t forget to click on Sign Out at the top of the screen when you have finished.

Top Tip

For more detailed searches use the Advanced Search option. Use the Browse facility to search by Topic or type of publication such as journals, magazines or conference proceedings. This is useful if you want to know if a particular publication is included in the database. If you need help at any time simply click on HELP at the bottom of the screen.
British Library Sounds

Explore over 50,000 unique selected recordings from the British Library’s extensive collection which come from all over the world and cover the entire range of recorded sound including music, drama, literature, oral history, wildlife and environmental sounds.

At the list of subject databases for Games, Computing & Creative Technologies scroll down and click on British Library Sounds.

Searching

You can search the entire site by entering a search term in the Search box or you can select a Collection and then do a search in that particular category.

At the results page, for more information about a particular recording, click on the title.
At the bottom of the next page, more information is provided about the record such as its duration, date of recording, interviewers, interviewees etc. and an abstract about the recording.

To listen to a particular recording, click on the play button near the top of the page, but remember to use headphones so as not to disturb other library users. To pause play, click on .

Note: copyright laws may prevent you from listening to certain recordings that are held in the collection.

You can create a list of favourite recordings or playlists to listen to later. To do this however, you must first create an account by clicking on Register at the top of the screen.
Discover@Bolton

Finding a definition

It may be useful for you to define the terms included in your assignment in order to fully understand the topic you are researching. If you type a single keyword or phrase in the search box and run the search, a definition will appear on the right of the screen. Where available, this will be sourced from one of our reference databases, such as Credo Reference. However, if a definition isn't available from these sources, Wikipedia will be used. Please check with your tutor as to its acceptability as a quotable reference.

Basic searching

In the Search box type a keyword for the topic you are looking for and then click on Discover.

For multiple words or a phrase use speech marks, eg “painting technique”

Top Tip

You can use * to replace letters within words, eg, organi*ation will search for organization and organisation. You can also use * to truncate stems of words eg, write* will search for writers, written etc

Narrowing your search

If your search has produced a lot of results you will need to narrow it down. One way of doing this is by adding another keyword(s) to your original search term, combining 2 or more terms by using AND, OR, and NOT.

You can also refine a search by using the filter options to the left of your search results. These allow you to limit results to include ‘full text’ and ‘peer reviewed’ articles only, as well as limit by ‘item type’, ‘subject’, ‘publication date’ and ‘language’.
Peer-reviewed scholarly journals provide the highest quality academic information so you may wish to start with these results before looking at magazines, trade publications, etc.

**Note:** After you have refined your search an option to Clear Filters appears. Click this before you run another search – unless you wish to keep the same filter options.
Advanced searching

Advanced searching gives you more search options and removes the need to type AND, OR etc. Click on the Advanced Search icon at the top of the screen. This can be useful if the basic search facility gives you too many results. Try changing All fields to either Subject, Title, Abstract or Author etc, this will provide you with a smaller more relevant set of results.

The screen below shows available search fields and selections made in order to retrieve a smaller set of relevant results.

Looking at your search results

Results are displayed in brief detail showing the title of the article, author, the journal in which it appears and the date of publication.
The type of resource is shown under the title and author/publication details.

To see the abstract (summary of an article), plus additional details, move your mouse over a particular record and these will appear in the right side pane.

To look at the full text of a record, click on the Title of the record or Full Text Online.

Note: Although most records provide access to the full text of an article if Citation Online is displayed under the details of a record the full text may not be available via the Library’s subscriptions.
In this case search the Library Catalogue to check whether the journal is available from another source or in print format. If it isn’t, you can order the article for free by using the online Inter-Library Loan service. Please see link below for full details:
http://www.bolton.ac.uk/library/Borrowing/Inter-Library-Loans.aspx

Top Tip
You can sort your results by date of publication or relevance by clicking on results sorted by date (newest) at the top of the results screen.

If you click on Cite, you will be presented with a list of citation options, select Harvard. You can email or copy and paste into your list of references or bibliography, but there are many variations of Harvard so make sure it is the one required by your tutor. You may need to amend your citation once you have copied it into your Word document.
Saving selected search results

Before you can export, print, or email multiple records, you must first save selected results to a ‘folder’.

To do this, click on the folder icon at the right of the record. You will then notice that results appear in a folder at the top of the screen.

To open and view the contents of a folder, click on at the top of the screen.

To delete a record from a folder, click on at the side of it. To close a folder and return to your results, click on at the top of the screen.

Printing and emailing selected results

Once you have records in a folder, you have the option to print, email or export them.

Click on the folder icon and then choose whether you want to print, email or export them by clicking on the relevant option to the right.

Note: Contents of a folder are retained temporarily only, when you exit the database or after an extended period of inactivity (20mins) they will be cleared. You can permanently save items by creating a ProQuest Flow account – see next page.
ProQuest Flow

Creating a ProQuest Flow account allows you to store all your saved items permanently and to manage and organize your documents effectively. To create an account, click on Flow Log In at the top right of the screen.

You must enter your university email address and choose your own password. Once you have created your account, when you click on the folder icon of a record it will be permanently stored in your flow account. To access Flow at any time, click on the folder icon at the top of the screen.

You can create folders to organize your results by using My Collections. You can also share resources with other people using the Sharing function which allows you to email them direct from Flow. It is possible to select resources to create an exportable bibliography, but note that you may need to amend the bibliography to the exact style you require. There are many other functions, so explore the various options available to you.

Top Tip
If you need help at any time in Discover@Bolton, click on Help at the top of the screen.

Using individual databases

You may prefer to access and search databases individually. Although the interfaces are different for each the principles of searching are essentially the same. Apply the skills you have learned in using SCOPUS, IEEE Xplore and Discover@Bolton when using such databases.

Other databases relevant to the subject areas of Games, Computing and Creative Technologies include:

ProQuest Central (included in Discover@Bolton)
ScienceDirect (included in Discover@Bolton)
For further help with some of these databases see the relevant cribsheets available on the Subject Resources page for Media, Writing and Production.

Finally

This guide is only an introduction to electronic databases. There are other sources available via your subject page which can help you with your research. Although all electronic resources have different interfaces, the search principles are the same.

If you require further help please contact your subject librarian, Steve Crimes, at s.crimes@bolton.ac.uk or Subject Help Desk on 01204 903404.

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