

Search and Evaluate scholarly Literature

A guide to writing scholarly Papers in Economics and Business studies

Quality Criteria for scholarly Literature

Only select reliable, scholarly sources – that are **fit for being cited**.

- To support your argument, only use sources that fulfil these criteria:
 - The author belongs to an academic institution;
 - It addresses the research community: Subject-specific terminology; publication in a scholarly journal / working paper series;
 - Transparency and academic practice: citations and reference list.
 - Is it a recent publication? Relevant to the topic?
- Check the citation frequency of articles. (Consider that recent articles or those in specialist areas cannot have high citation rates.)
These databases contain citation information:
Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI) in Web of Science | Scopus | CITEc.
- Journal rankings help you to evaluate a journal. Is it frequently read and cited in the scholarly community? Use e.g.:
Journal Citation Reports (JCR) | Scimago Journal Ranking | Scopus metrics.

Types of Publications

- Use articles from highly-ranked, peer-reviewed journals and current working papers from important research institutes. (Working papers are published by research institutes and universities quickly after a research is done; usually they are freely available online.)
- As soon as a working paper has been published as an article in a journal, quote the more recent, reviewed article. (Check the author's website to see if the paper has been published as an article.)

Subject Databases

- Articles from journals can be found in subject databases, like:
EBSCO Business Source | EconBiz | ABI/Inform (ProQuest) | EconLit | JSTOR.
- Google Scholar is useful as an additional, not as an exclusive source.
- Working papers can be found in:
RePEc (economics) | SSRN (business studies) | EconBiz.

Search Tips for subject Databases

Increase the **scope** and **relevance** of your results:

- Search mainly with English search terms – as most scholarly publications are in English language. Use terms from your first language, additionally.
- Look for translations, synonyms, wider or narrower search terms for your topic in the subject-specific vocabulary STW - Standard Thesaurus for Economics (zbw.eu/stw).
- Include singular and plural forms: (“*Family firm*” OR “*Family firms*”).
- Include all endings, usually with *:
(*Europ** will find *Europe / european / ...*).
- Use quotation marks to find compound words: “*Family business*”.
- Combine search terms with AND / OR / NOT:
→ (“*Family firm*” OR “*Family business*” OR “*Family firms*”) AND (“*Eastern Europe*”) NOT “*EU countries*”.

Access to Literature

Scholarly literature is usually available in your **university library** – online or in print. Use the remote access options of your library in order to access licensed online publications and databases from home. (Ask your librarians.)

Do not rely on free and easy access when you select your literature. Don't hesitate to ask your librarians if you find relevant publications but cannot access the full-text.

Support and Resources

- Discuss with your supervisor
- Ask your librarian
- [Section Research Skills in EconBiz](#)
- [Research Guide EconDesk](#) (ask the EconBiz team)



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