

LEARNING AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Skills for Researchers - Keeping up-to-date

There are a variety of approaches to help you stay informed of the latest research and publications in your subject area. This guide provides an overview of some of the services available to help you keep up to date.

Journal Table of Contents (TOCs)

A TOC service provides the table of contents of recent issues of particular journals; depending on the journal you can receive TOCs via email or RSS feeds. There are services where you can register for a TOC service including:

- ZETOC, which provides electronic TOCs from the British Library and covers over 28,500 journals. You can set up personalised email alerts or RSS feeds. In most cases you will be able to access abstracts or the full text of the articles.
- Find out about ZETOC ALERTS at <http://zetoc.mimas.ac.uk/alertguide.html>. Watch ZETOC's training videos at <http://zetoc.mimas.ac.uk/videos.html>.
- Individual Journals may also offer a TOC service via email or an RSS feed.

Saved Search Alerts

Databases and Indexes allow you to search for topics by keywords, topics and authors. When you have carried out a search you can create a search alert where the database will re-run the search, set within the parameters you choose (for example once a month). You will then receive details of any new articles which have been published either via email or RSS feed. You will need to create your own profile to set up alerts. Each database is different but the concept is the same; look for 'My profile' or 'My saved searches' to sign up for an alert.

Citation alerts

A citation alert will tell you when a specific article is cited in another work. It is useful for keeping track of when your own article is being cited or for key articles in your field, enabling you to find new articles in your subject area. Again to set up a citation alert you will need to create your own profile/account.

Three resources particularly useful for keeping track of who is citing a particular article are:

- Scopus – this database covers chemistry, physics, mathematics, engineering, life and health sciences, social sciences, psychology and economics, biological, agricultural and environmental sciences.
- Web of Knowledge – multi-disciplinary search platform covering science, social sciences and humanities; includes conference proceedings. (Access Web of knowledge and Scopus through our Resources page: <http://www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/resources.aspx>).
- Google Scholar – allows for some citation tracking but not all publications are included in Google Scholar. (You will need to create a Google account, for more information go to: <https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/27441?hl=en>)

Academic Networks

Academic networks are another way to get to know who is publishing in your field and also build contacts. Two such sites are Academia.edu (<http://www.academia.edu>) and ResearchGate, aimed at researchers in the sciences (<http://www.researchgate.net/>).

Social Media – Twitter

Increasingly, organisations, individual researchers and research teams are using Twitter to highlight their research, publications and news. Creating a Twitter account and following relevant accounts is a useful way to keep up to date. The links below will help you find relevant Twitter accounts.

- Academic tweeters - Subject-based list of recommended academic tweeters, compiled by LSE researchers (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2011/09/02/academic-tweeters-your-suggestions-in-full/>).
- Advanced Twitter search - Twitter's advanced search has lots of options to help you pinpoint what you're after (<https://twitter.com/search-advanced>).
- Twitter lists - lists are a useful way of finding others with similar interests. This example is a list of history researchers; see if you can find lists relevant to your field (<http://support.twitter.com/articles/76460-using-twitter-lists>).
- Researchers can use their online presence to highlight their research interests to other researchers making Twitter a useful tool for networking and collaboration.

RSS Feeds

A RSS feed allows you to see when a website has added new content. Saved search alerts and TOC's may also give you the option of receiving your alert either by email or through an RSS feed. To subscribe to RSS feeds you will need to create an account in a RSS reader such as Bloglines.

Conference Alerts

An online calendar of academic and professional conferences worldwide. Users can view current and upcoming conferences and set up alerts to inform them of conferences in their chosen fields: <https://conferencealerts.com/index>

Help and Advice

For help and advice on any aspect of keeping up to date, please see the LIS Researcher webpages at: <http://www.wlv.ac.uk/lib/academics/research.aspx>



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