

Glossary

Abstract: a brief set of statements that summarise, classify, evaluate, or describe the important points of a text.

Alerts: an existing saved search that can be re-run on a regular basis with results emailed directly to the user.

Bibliographic information: a description of a distinct item in a collection. Bibliographic records include the author, title and publication details and other data which identify the item.

Boolean logic: the algebraic system, developed by George Boole that is applied to Boolean expressions such as AND, OR, NOT. Boolean operators are not to be confused with **proximity** operators such as NEAR.

Citation index: a bibliographic index which allows the user to trace research forward in time by searching for articles that have cited a known relevant article.

Combine sets: the ability to combine distinct sets of search results using AND, OR, NOT to narrow or broaden a search.

Command search: a sophisticated command-line search option allowing combinations of advanced options such as Boolean operators, field codes and wildcards, for example –

py=(1999 or 2000) and de=(mentor\$ or role\$) and ab=(Detroit or Michigan)

Descriptors: pre-approved and strictly defined terms that are used by indexers to indicate the significant concepts within documents.

Explode: the explode capability searches for the marked term and all its narrower terms.

Field: in a database, the part of a record reserved for a particular type of data. For example, in a library catalogue, author, title, ISBN, subject headings, etc. would all be fields.

Full text: when the entire content of an item, such as an article, book, or encyclopaedia, is available in electronic format.

Glossary: an alphabetical list, with definitions, of terms specific to a particular subject field.

Identifiers: not controlled vocabulary but rather a stop-gap measure used by indexers to indicate subject concepts discussed within documents when there are no appropriate **descriptors** for the concepts. These identifiers are neither pre-approved nor strictly defined. However, the indexer feels that there is a concept so central to a document that it must be indexed. Identifiers may also be proper names.

Index: an alphabetical listing of terms or subjects.

Key word searching: performing a search on a library catalogue or database by combining significant words which relate to a specific subject.

Marked list: individual records of particular interest selected from the search results list that might subsequently be saved, printed, emailed or exported to bibliographic software.

Phrase searches: words enclosed in quotation marks will 'generally' be searched for as a phrase as opposed to individual words anywhere within a record.

Proximity searches: limit the number of words between your search terms.

Search operators: linking terms, such as AND, NOT, OR, NEAR, ADJ.

Stop words: words which are not indexed. Usually stop words include articles (a, an, the) and other common words that appear often.

Thesaurus: an organised list of pre-defined subject terms that cover all the ideas and themes to be found in a specific subject area. They are often arranged in families of broader, narrower and related terms so you can start with your own key word and follow Thesaurus links to the precise terms that have been used to classify all the documents in the database.

Truncation: the shortening of a search word (with a symbol or character) in order to search among multiple variants or spellings of a word. If \$ is used as the truncation symbol, searching for read\$ will locate the words read, reading, readiness, readability etc. Check the Help within individual databases to find the truncation symbol.

Wild card: the use of a symbol or character to replace one or more characters in a search word. If * is used as the wild card symbol, searching for col*r will locate colour and color; wom*n will locate woman and women. Check the Help within individual databases to find the wild card symbol.

For further eLibrary Resource Guides see <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/services/344.html>