Keyword and Advanced Keyword Searching on the OPAC

Doing research in the Library

If you want to find out what books (and other material) we hold in the library on a particular subject, the best way to search the OPAC for them is to do a **Keyword** or **Advanced Keyword** Search. (See the OPAC homepage for these options)

**Keyword Search**

Go to the OPAC homepage at [www.library.dit.ie](http://www.library.dit.ie). Click on the **Keyword** option on the lefthand side of the screen.

You will see a box for entering your search term or terms, and below the box, some useful search tips, such as truncation and (Boolean) operators.

If you have a single term to describe your topic, type it into the box and press return/click on the ‘Search’ button. The OPAC will then display a list of records which contain the word you used. It will search for this word anywhere within the record, and not just within the title or author fields.

If you want to describe your topic with more than one word, you will need to combine them using the Boolean operators mentioned above. These are ‘**AND**’, ‘**OR**’ and ‘**NOT**’.

**Phrases:** If your search term contains more than one word, i.e. is a phrase, like “photo journalism”, put double inverted commas around the phrase to ensure that the OPAC searches for that phrase rather than the individual words separately.

**Boolean Operators** (or combining words together)

**AND:** *photographers AND war* – this will produce a list of records that have both the words ‘*photographers*’ **AND** ‘*war*’ in them.

**OR:** *photograph OR image* – in this case, you will get a list of records with either the word ‘*photograph*’ **OR** the word ‘*image*’.

**NOT:** *photographer AND NOT director* – here, the OPAC will display a list of records that have the word ‘*photographer*’ in them, but **NOT** the word ‘*director*’.

**Tip:** some OPAC’s and databases will use ‘**NOT**’ instead of ‘**AND NOT**’.
**Truncation**

The asterisk ‘*’ is used as a truncation or wildcard symbol, in that it can stand for anything, i.e. no letters/1 or more letters. If you want to search for records of books on ‘Photography/Photographer/…’, you can save time by typing in ‘photograph*’ instead of “photo OR photographs OR photographer OR photographers OR photographic OR …….”. This does all those searches in one go.

Using the truncation symbol ‘*’ saves a lot of time!

**Advanced Keyword Search**

When you are comfortable with using the **Keyword** Search function, and want to do more complex keyword searches, or need to be more refined in your searching, then the **Advanced Keyword** Search is a good option.

You can reach this page by clicking on the **Advanced** Search button on the **Keyword** Search page, or at the OPAC home page.

On this page, you are given four boxes in which to enter your search terms or keywords. You can also search within **different fields**, e.g. author, title or subject, or all of the fields, and are given the option of combining the terms in the four boxes with any of the three Boolean operators, **AND**, **OR** and **AND NOT**.

In addition to these features, you can limit your search by choosing a **particular DIT Library, language, year of publication** (or range of years) and **material type**, e.g. thesis or video.

It is important to remember that the OPAC contains details of not just books but also, **theses, videos, websites, online databases, cds/dvds** and **musical scores**, amongst others.

Lastly, you can also decide how you want your results sorted for display.

When you have entered your search terms, chosen how or whether to limit the search, and chosen your preferred sorting option, click on the Submit button and the OPAC will complete your search according to your specifications.