

Summary of information retrieval

– VT18

- To pass the project at the course 729G19, the *Search plan* and the *Summary of information retrieval* assignments must be completed.
- This assignment is made together in your project groups. It is a continuation of your *Search plan*.
- Start with this assignment immediately after submitting the *Search plan*.
- Your continuous information retrieval for the project must be performed in accordance with the instructions below, and summarized and presented in a reflective summary with your own words in a document named *Summary of information retrieval*.
- Your text should be about 2 A4, font: Times New Roman size 12 with single line spacing (1.0).
- *Summary of information retrieval* must be included as a supplement last in the *rappordispositionen* and sent to Mikael.Rosell@liu.se by Monday, 14 May at 12.00.
- Feedback on *Summary of information retrieval* will be given by email by 21 May.
- If your assignment does not meet the specified requirements, you will be asked to do necessary corrections and re-submit.
- For questions, please contact Mikael.Rosell@liu.se.

Instructions

The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on and demonstrate how the group's ability to use relevant search tools, to plan and implement effective information searches, as well as the ability to evaluate sources, has progressed since the information retrieval presented in your *Search plan*. To fulfill this purpose your continuous search for information for the project need to be carried out according to the information retrieval theory in Chapter 6: *The online search process* in the book *How to find information*¹.

You will need to give concrete examples of your ability to gradually improve the effectiveness of your information searches by:

- Finding and evaluate new keywords.
- Evaluating and motivating the usefulness of different search tools.
- Combining multiple keywords into a relevant search query.
- Using search operators and the search tools own search features effectively.

You will also need to do a well-thought-out source-critical evaluation of a chosen source.

¹ Rumsey, Sally (2008). *How to find information*. New York: Open University Press. Kapitel 6: *The online searching process* <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/linkoping-ebooks/reader.action?ppg=68&docID=345140&tm=1502799235090>

Here you will find more detailed instructions for the assignment.

The assignment is divided into 5 sections, *Keywords*, *Search Tools*, *Examples of search queries*, *Source Criticism*, and *Evaluation*. Use these sections as headings to the text in your own document.

1. Keywords

Start with the keywords you specified in your *Search plan* when you continue with the information retrieval for your project. Be sure to use new keywords that you find, e.g. in headings, abstracts, and subject lists of relevant sources, to gradually improve the efficiency your search queries. Provide examples of new keywords that you have used.

Enter and motivate which keywords have been the most and least useful to find relevant sources. The keywords you used in the *Search plan*? The new keywords that have been added afterwards? Or a combination of them?

2. Search Tools

Start with the mandatory search tools you specified in your *Search plan* when you continue with the information retrieval for your project. As your Information retrieval progresses you might need to replace one search tools with another. For example, start using a database instead of an encyclopedia. If so, motivate why you change and add the name of the new search tool.

Evaluate, compare and motivate which of the three mandatory search tools that has been most useful and/or less useful to find relevant information for your project. Also reflect on if and how your users experience of your search tools has changed since the *Search plan*. As in the *Search plan*, use all seven of the following criteria when evaluating the search tools.

Please note that UniSearch may not be replaced with another search tools. If you changed search tools, only the new ones need to be included in the evaluation. Google and Google scholar can't be chosen as one of the mandatory search tools, you are of course free to also use them both in your information retrieval for your project.

Criteria to evaluate search tools

- 1) What topics, publication types (*journal articles, conference articles, books, etc.*) and data quantity (*e.g. 15 000 scientific journals*) does the search tool covers?
- 2) The search interface's user-friendliness in the search tool, intuitive search interface, or does it take a long time to understand how to use the search tool?
- 3) How are the possibilities to create search queries with search features (*e.g., subject, language, publication type or publication year, etc.*) and search operators (*e.g. Boolean operators, truncation and phrase search, etc.*) in the search tool to find relevant sources?
- 4) How are the sources in the search tools presented and can you sort the result list if necessary on relevance, publication year, number of citations, etc.?

- 5) Has a content quality control (e.g., *peer-review*) been conducted of the sources presented by the search tools?
- 6) Can you access the source in its full text via the search tools?
- 7) Other reflections linked to the advantages and disadvantages of the search tools?

3. Examples of search queries

You need to add search operators (e.g. *Boolean operators, truncation and phrase search, etc.*) and search features (e.g., *subject, language, publication type or publication year, etc.*) to your search queries to improve the effectiveness of your information searches.

Compare two of your relevant search queries in UniSearch, one from your *Search plan* and one from one of your later search sessions. The examples should contain any combination of keywords that have been used. The later example must also include search operators and search features that were used to improve the relevancy of your search results.

Motivate how your ability to create search queries has been developed and improved since the *Search plan*.

4. Source Criticism

Use chapter 11: *evaluation of resources* in *How to find information*² and the following source-critical criteria to evaluate one source that you use in your project, specify which one. Motivate why it is credible and relevant as well as reflect on whether there may be any problems with using the source.

Reflect on what has been the easiest and the most difficult with critical evaluation of your sources during the project. Was it how you thought it would be in your *Search plan*? What is the most important thing you have learned about source criticism since then?

- Who is the author/s, background and merit?
- Who is the publisher and what does it have for reputation?
- Has the source undergone any kind of content quality control (e.g. peer review)?
- Are the conclusions made reasonable based on reported results?
- Are data results, theory and research method presented in the publication?
- Are the sources clearly listed in the reference list?
- Number of references (cited by) to the source?
- Is the results and conclusions contradicted or confirmed by sources of other authors?
- How current/new is the publication?

² Rumsey, Sally (2008). *How to find information*. New York: Open University Press. Kapitel 11: evaluation of resources
<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/linkoping/reader.action?ppg=143&docID=10229839&tm=1407942337234>

5. Evaluation

- How well have the information you found throughout the information retrieval process been able to answer your project question/s?
- What has been the hardest and easiest during your search for information?
- Is there something you would like to change or redo if you had to do the information retrieval process again?
- Reflect on what you have learned about information retrieval and source criticism and how you can use it during your ongoing studies?