

Planning your Search

1. What do I hope to find out?

Being aware of the information you need

First define your requirements by asking yourself some initial questions:

- What is your assignment? Do you have to write an essay or give a presentation?
- Should your information be as up-to-date as possible or do you need to search historically, or both?
- Are you looking for debates and opinions on your topic or statistical data or facts and figures, or both?
- Do you have to present your own findings from experiments or questionnaires?
- Did the course co-ordinator provide a reading list?
- What are the limiting factors? *e.g.* when is the work to be handed in or are resources restricted in any way?
- Have you made sure you understand exactly what you have been asked to do? Ask your lecturers if you're uncertain.

Only when you are certain that you understand what is required of you, can you start your research for the most appropriate information.