Objectives
The objectives of this tutorial are to enable you to become proficient with different database searching techniques:

- Connecting search terms with Boolean operators
- Using truncation to increase retrieval
- Using wildcards to cope with spelling variations

These techniques will ensure a better search result when you use the databases of newspaper and journal articles supplied by the library for your use.

Introduction to Boolean operators

AND
Connect your search terms with the AND operator to retrieve records containing both words.

For example: finance AND eBusiness

If you want to retrieve articles that contain both keywords, type AND between your search terms or use the drop-down menus or radio buttons provided by most databases.

OR
Connect your search terms with the OR operator to retrieve records containing either or both word(s).

For example: customer relationship management OR CRM

The OR operator is useful where there is more than one term to describe the concept you are looking for.

NOT
Connect your search terms with the NOT operator to retrieve records containing the first term but not the second term.

For example: e-business NOT e-commerce

Use the NOT operator to exclude words that you believe will retrieve unwanted records.
**Using Truncation to increase retrieval**

Truncation is a feature to describe using part of a word or search term, when you may want to retrieve records which use multiple variations of the word.

For example: using the truncated word *market* will retrieve:

- market
- markets
- marketing
- marketer
- marketers
- etc

Type in the stem of the word and add the truncation symbol to ensure you retrieve plural, singular and other forms of your keyword. Check the online HELP to determine what the symbol is for the database you are using. It may be an asterisk, question mark or exclamation mark.

**Using wildcards to cope with spelling variations**

Online databases are mostly international and will have British and American spellings. To make sure you retrieve all relevant articles, use the wildcard symbol to pick up both forms.

For example: using the search term *organisation* will retrieve

- organisation
- organization

In this example the wildcard symbol is a question mark (?).

**Summary of search techniques**

- Use Boolean operators, **AND, OR & NOT** between search terms
- Truncate keywords to their stem, eg. *Comput*.
- Use a wildcard symbol to allow for spelling variations, eg. *Behavio?r*

Truncation and wildcard symbols vary among databases. Check the help screens of the database you are searching. Use Boolean operators to refine your search. In most cases you will use the **AND** operator which is usually the default operator.