**My Research question**

**1. Mind-Map –** Put down topic areas, broader terms, narrower terms, alternative expressions, different spellings.

**2. Pick out the possible keywords.** Include any useful truncation, phrases or Subject   
 headings.

**3. Combine your keywords effectively to construct a search.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Concept 1**  **AND** | OR |  |
| **Concept 2**  **AND** | OR |  |
| **Concept 3** | OR |  |

**4. Record your search history**

Record the search string (combination of keywords from the previous box).   
Remember to save the search using **Search history** in the databases.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Search string** | **Database** | **No. of results** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**5. Identify and apply your Inclusion/exclusion criteria.**

These can be country, date, age group, gender, type of research – depending on your discipline and topic. Some can be applied using filters in the databases as part of the previous search, others will require a quick check of the **Abstracts** to identify relevance.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Search string** | **Database** | **Exclusion** | **No. of relevant results** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |

**6. Save and Record your key papers**

Organise folders or use Refworks or something similar to store your results.

Start to summarise your key results using a table like this or the critical reading grid.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference** | **Purpose** | **Methods** | **Key findings/main points** | **Implications for my study** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |