

Social Sciences: quick list of abstracting and indexing sources
[ML-CR17]

The organisation of all the services in this list is decided by their editors. Overlap between publications in the same discipline can be surprisingly slight. The University of Sheffield Library in which each one is kept is given together with an indication of the coverage.

INDEXES

Normally indexes only give citation information and do not attempt to summarise the content of the particular document.

1. [Anthropological index online](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/anth.html)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/anth.html>

This indexes the current periodicals in the Museum of Mankind from 1970 onwards.

2. [Applied social sciences index and abstracts \(ASSIA\)](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/assia.html)

Location: Main Library (ABS 305)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/assia.html>

This is a British index that covers the whole area of social sciences from 1987 to date and which includes abstracts selectively. It provides information for social workers, health professionals and other caring professions and the coverage includes sociology, psychology and relevant aspects of anthropology, economics, medicine, law and politics.

3. [IBSS via BIDS](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/bidsibss.html)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/bidsibss.html>

Provides access to the **International bibliography of the social sciences**, a very large international database of references covering the core disciplines of economics, sociology, politics and anthropology dating back to 1951. There are over 2,600 social science titles indexed in this database and over 30% of these are in languages other than English. There is some coverage of management, psychological, educational and geographical topics in this database but the strength lies in the four principal topics. Books are indexed as well as journal articles and about 6,000 new citations are included each year.

Information is retrieved in exactly the same way as the other **BIDS** databases. This service is highly recommended and researchers in appropriate disciplines should start their literature searches with this database.

4. [Web of Knowledge via MIMAS \(Social science citation index\)](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/wos.html)

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/wos.html>

The articles included are not indexed by topic but by the papers that are cited in the bibliographies at the end of the articles. Some of the records contain brief abstracts. The great benefit of **Web of Knowledge** is that it enables researchers to move out of the strait-jacket imposed by traditional indexing and abstracting services. A disadvantage is that coverage is uncertain (issues are sometimes omitted) and the journals scanned are biased towards North America. Many major British journals are excluded. The index does need practice and skill to use

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/libdocs/ml-cr17.pdf>

with advantage. It is usual for beginners to concentrate on searching by using author name and title words. Here it is important to be aware of the hazards of using natural language. Once the basics have been mastered, the use of the citation section brings greater rewards. The citation index enables you to enter the details of any key paper in your subject area and to follow the line of research forward in time, tracing researchers who have done more recent work. You can also follow the works of specific authors and track down research activities of particular organisations.

Science citation index is also useful for psychologists and others researching medical topics or ones in the neurosciences. Although many journals are indexed in both the **Science** and the **Social sciences citation indexes**, the extent of the overlap between the two titles can be surprisingly low. It is not unusual to find that one index has over 3 times as many articles indexed as the other, even when they cover exactly the same journal title for the same period. For effective searching **both indexes** should be used.

5. **[British education index](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/bei.html)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/bei.html>

This is an excellent index and anyone conducting research on any topic relating to children or training (as well as education) will find it relevant. The concentration on British aspects make it valuable for people studying social policy, social work, child psychology and speech.

6. **British humanities index**

Location: Printed Index in the Main Library. (ABS 370.5)

In particular this provides good coverage of weekly journals and the popular periodical press. It is the only source for some British social science journals before 1987. Despite its slightly misleading name, the **BHI** is always worth checking in any social science literature search.

7. **[ERIC](http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/eric.html)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/eric.html>

Even though, there is a strong US/Canadian coverage, British issues are dealt with adequately and it is worth searching for education topics in both indexes. A surprisingly wide range of psychological topics are also covered as well as the political and 'welfare' aspects of education. There are articles relevant to the conduct of academic research in all the social science disciplines on the **ERIC** database.

8. **PAIS International in print**

Location: Printed index in the Main Library. (ABS 320.5)

Formerly known as **PAIS bulletin** or **Public affairs information service bulletin**, it indexes books, government reports and journal articles. There is a very strong American bias with the selection of journal coverage but "public affairs" is interpreted in its broadest sense as policy relating to social, foreign, political and economic affairs of all countries. Brief single sentence abstracts are given for some of the entries.

ABSTRACTS

Abstracting services perform the same function as indexing services, but they add a brief summary of the content of the particular documents.

- **Abstracts in social gerontology**

Location: Printed index in the Main Library (ABS 305)

An American information service with a good international coverage that includes all aspects of ageing policy (for example it has a section on middle-age unemployment) as well as all aspects of social care and policy for the old. It is a recent subscription with a short back-file. Each issue selects 250 abstracts of journal article or books as well a few government reports and research

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studies.

- **[EMBASE](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/bidsemb.html>

EMBASE is a pharmacological and biomedical database with coverage of over 3,500 journals and a large number of them are European ones. It is a useful resource for anyone researching "care" topics and it contains information not available in other medical and biological databases.

- **[Caredata](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/caredata.html> and *Printed index (ABS 360.5)*

Published in paper as **Caredata abstracts**, this is an information service for British social and community care but there is also a very small international section. Included with the abstracts are two full-text series: 'Joseph Rowntree Findings' and 'NISW Policy Briefings'. In a separate section there are full-text copies of the health circulars published by the English Department of Health. The database is a good one, though, and is recommended to anyone interested in any aspect of British social policy.

- **[EconLit](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/econlit.html>

Published by the American Economic Association this is the most used source to economic literature. It is also extremely useful to students of geography, management and political science because amongst the topics covered are monetary theory, labour economics, political economy and urban economics.

- **Geo abstracts**

Location: Printed index in the Geography Library

Published in 7 parts, **Geo abstracts** provides abstracts for both physical and human geography. It is, however, particularly useful for "political" and "sociological" topics as well. Those researchers studying topics like housing, trade or migration, urban issues, international development or pollution will be surprised at the amount of relevant literature in 'geographical' journals on 'their' subject. There is a combined annual index.

- **International political science abstracts**

Location: Printed index in the Main Library (ABS 320.5)

IPSA is truly international in coverage and, unlike most other services listed here, includes articles written in languages other than English. The obvious priority is international relations but there is a surprising shortage of entries concerning the European Union. There are, however, sections on political philosophy and area studies. Despite its faults, it is the best set of abstracts specifically for political scientists.

- **[PsycINFO](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/psyclit.html>

The detailed coverage of its topic makes **PsycINFO** essential for anyone concerned with psychology or related fields. Researchers interested in social policy or education will also find plenty of interest in **PsycINFO**. An advantage of this database is that it also contains an index of book articles. It is also worth noting that those with a research interest in a psychological topic may find other networked databases very useful, such as **EMBASE**, **BIOSIS** or the **BIOMED** system.

PsycINFO is produced by the American Psychological Association and provides abstracts from over 1400 international journals in psychology and related fields from 1974 to the present. The section that indexes book chapters starts at 1987.

- **Sociological abstracts**

Location: Printed index in the Main Library (ABS 305)

The definition of 'sociological' does not entirely fit the research profile of our Department of Sociological Studies. Those journals specialising in anthropology, social policy, social work, or social development are not covered thoroughly.

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/libdocs/ml-cr17.pdf>

- **[URBADISC](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/urbadisc.html>

The best source of information on urban and regional planning issues. The strength of this database is its broad approach to the subject with linked databases covering French and Spanish as well as British information. It is a vital source for urban geographers and architects as well as planners but there are also large files of interest to those interested in social issues, leisure management, sport and libraries, local government, economics and politics generally. The various files start at different times but there is at least 10 years coverage on a single disc, which is updated annually.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Listed below are a few of the other CD-ROMs (some of which have Guides) held on the network.

1. **[Independent](#)** <http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/indepen.html>, **[Daily Telegraph](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/teleg.html>, **[Guardian](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/guardian.html>, and **[The Times](#)**

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/times.html> ([Guide reference ML-CR1](#))

<http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/libdocs/ml-cr1.html>

This service covers the full text of the final London editions of the Independent and The Independent on Sunday from 1989 to date. The text of the Times and Sunday Times and the Guardian starts from 1990 but the Daily Telegraph, the Sunday Telegraph and the Observer start from 1991 or 1992. Most tabular and graphic materials, entertainment listings, advertisements, pictures and captions are excluded.

2. **[United Kingdom Official Publications \(UKOP\)](#)** <http://www.shef.ac.uk/library/cdfiles/ukop.html>

This is an index of all British government publishing since 1980 and includes Parliamentary, Departmental and free publications. The index also contains an index to the most important European Union publications and those from inter-governmental organisations like the UN and the OECD.

Enquiries should in the first instance be directed to the Enquiry Desk in the appropriate University Branch Library. There is also a team of Academic Liaison Librarians who are able to assist with particular enquiries that cannot be answered immediately:

- **[Alastair Allan](#)** [a.allan@sheffield.ac.uk]
Human Communication Sciences, Journalism, Official Publications, Psychology, Sociological Studies, Information Studies
- **[Denise Harrison](#)** [denise.harrison@sheffield.ac.uk]
Education
- **[Maria Mawson](#)** [m.b.mawson@sheffield.ac.uk]
Law, Management, Leisure Management
- **[Gill Goddard](#)** [g.m.goddard@sheffield.ac.uk]
East Asian Studies, Politics

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