Grey literature can be difficult to locate. An initial useful strategy is to identify the key organisations working within your subject area. Use their websites to identify publications. The following tools and sources can also make the process less challenging.

**Google**

**Google Advanced:** http://www.google.co.uk/advanced_search

This can be a quick and effective tool, but **bear in mind that Google is a source of lots of poor quality documents.**

You can limit your search by:

- Region
- File type (selecting PDF is recommended)
- Site or domain.

**Site search:** to search across a website, type its address (e.g. www.noo.org.uk) into the ‘site or domain’ search box.

**Domain search** will allow you to search across a specific type of website or across websites based in one country. For example:

- Use gov.uk to search across UK government websites - preceded by topic if wished e.g. leadership site:.gov.uk
- Use ac.uk to search across UK academic websites – as before
- Use .se to search for resources published in Sweden (see other country examples: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Internet_top-level_domains)

**Format search** allows you to find a specific type of file. For example:

- Leadership filetype:.doc – will retrieve word documents on leadership
- Leadership filetype:.pdf – will retrieve pdf documents on leadership
- Leadership filetype:.ppt – will retrieve Powerpoints on leadership

**Google Scholar:** http://scholar.google.co.uk/

It’s unclear which publishers allow their content to be included in Google Scholar but it does provide access to scholarly references, primarily journal article abstracts, but also conference proceedings/ papers and theses (use ‘conference’ as a keyword when searching for conferences).
**Government**

**Scottish Government and Parliamentary Publications:**
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/Recent

Use the ‘keywords’ search box (rather than the ‘topic’ drop down box)

**Parliamentary Bills:** http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills.aspx

**Scottish legislation:** http://www.legislation.gov.uk/browse/scotland

**UK Government Publications:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications

- Limit, for example, by ‘publication type’ filter, and select ‘research and statistics’ only
- You can also filter by ‘government department’
- Note: content includes documents published after 31/03/2013 and earlier documents that pertain to current policy.

The **UK Government Web Archive** provides access to archived websites and documents: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/webarchive/

**UK Parliamentary Publications:** http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/

- Provides access to bills and legislation; select committee publications; Commons and Lords publications; library service research briefings; and Hansard.

Commons and Lords business bulletin: http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm/cmwib.htm


See also **Data.gov.uk:** http://data.gov.uk/

Data, including already available public data about how government works and policies are made, from central government, public sector bodies and local authorities.

**Doctoral Theses**

**EThOS (British Library):** http://ethos.bl.uk/

- EThOS provides records for 350,000 doctoral theses
- A log-in is not required to search
- You can access many digitised theses immediately, with no charge
- You can request that a theses be digitised
- Fees may be attached to the digitisation of some theses.
DART Europe provides open-access doctoral dissertations from a variety of EU institutions: http://www.dart-europe.eu/basic-search.php

(Note: Index to Theses is a key tool for identifying UK theses – we do not have access. You may wish to access this if you are studying for a postgraduate / research degree at an institution providing access to this resource - http://www.theses.com)

NDLTD (Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations) – A union catalogue of theses and dissertations from many countries http://www.ndltd.org/

Open Access Theses and Dissertations – This is an index of over 1.6 million electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) which are freely available over the web http://oatd.org/

University Repositories

Institutional Repository Search allows you to search across UK university repositories. It is a source of theses, reports, conference and journal article references: http://irs.mimas.ac.uk/

OpenDOAR (http://opendoar.org/search.php) and Registry of Open Access Repositories (http://roar.eprints.org/) provide similar services, but include international repositories.

Library Catalogues

British Library: http://explore.bl.uk/

Search for conferences, theses, book and journal titles. Use advanced search to refine your search.

COPAC: http://copac.ac.uk/search/

A tool that allows you to search across 90+ catalogues from major UK and Irish universities, national libraries and the British Library. This will allow you to identify book titles, among a range of other resources.

Conference Proceedings / Papers

These can be difficult to find, and some may never be published. Google, Google Scholar and the British Library catalogue may be of use, as well as ZETOC: http://zetoc.mimas.ac.uk/

Zetoc is the British Library’s table of contents service (29,000+ journals, conference papers). An NHS Scotland Athens account is required. It helps if you know the conference title, location and year when searching.
Several databases, available via the Knowledge Network (http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/home/library/databases.aspx) include references to conferences. These include:

- Web of Science
- Medline
- Cinahl.

**Health Management Information Consortium (HMIC)**

HMIC is a database of 174,000 official publications, journal articles and grey literature from the Department of Health (primarily post-1983) and the King’s Fund (post 1979).

Go to the Knowledge Network (select Ovid Databases): http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/home/library/databases.aspx - an NHS Scotland Athens account is required.

**Statistics, Census, Surveys and Data**

**Scotland**

National Records of Scotland: http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/

**Key Scottish Surveys**

Longitudinal:

- Longitudinal Studies Centre Scotland: http://www.lscs.ac.uk/
- Growing up in Scotland: http://growingupinscotland.org.uk/

Cross sectional:

- Health Behaviour in School Aged Children: http://www.hbsc.org/

- Public Attitudes to the Environment: http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Surveys/15731
• Scottish House Condition Survey: [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SHCS)
• Scottish Schools Adolescent Lifestyle and Substance Use Survey: [http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Public-Health/SALSUS/](http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Public-Health/SALSUS/)
• Scottish Social Attitudes Survey: [http://www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/scottish-social-attitudes/](http://www.natcen.ac.uk/our-research/research/scottish-social-attitudes/)
• Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation: [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD/)

**Further Scotland specific statistics**

• Information Services Division: [http://www.isdscotland.org/index.asp](http://www.isdscotland.org/index.asp)
• ScotPHO: [http://www.scotpho.org.uk/](http://www.scotpho.org.uk/)

**UK Statistics**


**Census / UK Data Service**

UK Data Service Census Support: [http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/](http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/)

• Microdata: [http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/microdata.aspx](http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/microdata.aspx)
• Flow data: [http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/flow-data.aspx](http://census.ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/flow-data.aspx)

(Note: access to boundary data is not available to users outside UK F.E. / H.E.)

The UK Data Service provides access to a wide range of datasets. See: [http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/key-data.aspx](http://ukdataservice.ac.uk/get-data/key-data.aspx)

See also:

• 2001 Scotland Census: [http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/common/home.jsp](http://www.scrol.gov.uk/scrol/common/home.jsp)
Historic Census

Histpop (UK population reports 1801-1937): http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/

A Vision of Britain Through Time (statistics, maps, Census etc., up to 2001): http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/

Further Sources


Edinburgh University Library data sources page: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/research-support/data-library/finding-data


Guidelines / Knowledge Summaries

- Scottish Inter-Collegiate Guidelines (SIGN): http://sign.ac.uk/guidelines/index.html
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE): http://guidance.nice.org.uk/
- NICE Clinical Knowledge Summaries: http://cks.nice.org.uk/
- TRIP (clinical search engine including guidelines): http://www.tripdatabase.com/

Think Tanks

‘Think Tanks’ are a useful source of research and ideas. The following list UK and international think tanks:

- http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/careers/wiki/List_of_Think_Tanks

Research Funding

Research Councils UK: http://gtr.rcuk.ac.uk/
The database allows you to search for information about research funded by the following:
- Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)
- Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- Engineering and Physical Sciences Research (EPSRC)
• Medical Research Council (MRC)
• Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)
• Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC)
• Technology Strategy Board (TSB)

Patient and consumer groups

Patient UK - patient support organisations, self help groups, health and disease information providers, etc http://www.patient.co.uk/

NHS Inform - Scotland’s national patient information website http://www.nhsinform.co.uk/

Finding the experts

LinkedIn and ResearchGate – social media sites which connects professionals https://www.linkedin.com and http://www.researchgate.net

The Knowledge Network – Communities/People Connect http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk

JISC/Listserve – subject/interest specific mailing lists - https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk

CHAIN - online mutual support network of over 13,500 people working in health and social care across the UK and beyond - http://chain.ulcc.ac.uk/chain/index.html

Clinical Trials

Cochrane Central Register of Clinical Trials - Details of published articles taken from bibliographic databases such as Medline, and other published and unpublished sources - http://www.cochrane.org/editorial-and-publishing-policy-resource/cochrane-central-register-controlled-trials-central

Current Controlled Trials - The ISRCTN registry is a primary clinical trial registry recognised by WHO and ICMJE that accepts all clinical research studies (whether proposed, ongoing or completed) - http://www.isrctn.com/

UK Clinical Trials Gateway - information about clinical research trials running in the UK - http://www.ukctg.nihr.ac.uk/default.aspx

World Health Organisation Clinical Trials Portal - provides access to a central database containing the trial registration data sets provided by registries from around the world. It also provides links to the full original records - http://apps.who.int/trialsearch/
Miscellaneous

Covers a range of public health topic areas


**Grey Literature Report (New York Academy of Medicine)**:  


**Archives Hub**: [http://archiveshub.ac.uk/](http://archiveshub.ac.uk/) (Descriptions of archives in UK universities and colleges).

**BASE**: http://www.base-search.net/about/en/index.php - the Bielefeld Academic Search Engine is one of the world's most voluminous search engines especially for academic open access web resources

**NHS Evidence**: [https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/](https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/) - part of NICE

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