

It is very important to think carefully about the topic you are researching before beginning your literature search. A useful and effective way of defining your topic is to plan a search strategy using the PICO Assessment.

This is a blank template to use for you to plan your own searches, please feel free to photocopy it or you can ask for another copy at the library desk.

The library staff can also help you with a search strategy if you are finding it difficult to retrieve relevant information for your research.

<b>Clinical Scenario</b>	<i>What information do you have?</i>	
<b>PICO Assessment</b>	<p><i>P</i>atient, population or problem</p> <p><i>I</i>ntervention (treatment), prognostic factor or exposure?</p> <p><i>C</i>omparison (if any)</p> <p><i>O</i>utcome(s) of interest (if any)</p>	
<b>Clinical Question</b>	What is the question behind the clinical scenario?	
<b>Databases</b>	<i>Which databases do you need to search?</i>	
<b>Type of Question</b>	<i>Diagnosis? Prognosis? Therapy? or Harm?</i>	
<b>Type of Research</b>	<i>E.g. Systematic Reviews, RCTs, Cohort Studies, Case Studies</i>	
<b>Search Limits</b>	<i>Do you want to restrict your search? (e.g. by date of publication, by language etc.)</i>	
<b>Keywords and/or Phrases</b>	<i>Think of keywords, phrases, synonyms etc.</i>	
<b>Search Combinations</b>	<i>How will you combine your words and phrases using AND, OR, NOT</i>	