

Constructing Your Search

Developing a Search

To develop a search in LexisNexis AU, enter your search term or phrase into the appropriate field e.g. *duty of care* – LexisNexis AU will search for consecutive words as phrases. Use connectors to show relationship of terms, eg *surveyor and negligent*, *contract or agree!* (truncated search), *internet w/p copyright* (within paragraph). A list of connectors appears below.

Frequently used connectors

- and** Finds both terms together in the same document.
Example: *professional and misconduct* finds documents that contain both the words professional and misconduct.
- w/p** Finds the two terms within the same paragraph.
Example: *corporations act w/p 588g* finds Corporations Act in the same paragraph as 588G.
NOTE: The **w/p** connector cannot be combined with the **w/n** connector.
- w/s** Finds the two terms within the same sentence.
Example: *professional w/s misconduct* finds professional in the same sentence as misconduct.
- w/n** Finds both terms within *n* words of each other. *n* can be any number between 1 and 255.
Example: *professional w/5 misconduct* finds professional within five words of misconduct (either word first).
- or** Links synonyms, alternative forms of expression, acronyms and so on.
Example: *contract or agreement* finds either contract or agreement.
- and not** Excludes documents that contain specified words or phrases. Use this connector with caution because it might exclude relevant documents. Always try to use this connector at the end of your search.
Example: *murder and not manslaughter* finds the word murder anywhere in the document, but does not retrieve any documents that contain the word manslaughter anywhere in the same document.

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Truncation (!) and wildcard (*) searches

Truncation The truncation symbol ! replaces any number of characters at the end of the word.
Example: *neglig!* finds negligent, negligently, negligence and negligible.

Wildcard The wildcard * replaces a single character at any point in a word.
Example: *maximi*e* finds both maximise and maximize. The wildcard is particularly useful if you are unsure of the spelling of a particular word or name. You can use multiple wildcards in a single word.

Remember:

- Lowercase letters will also find uppercase letters, and vice versa - unless you instruct the system to do otherwise (see below).
- LexisNexis AU automatically finds singular, most plural, and possessive endings for search terms, e.g. searching for city will also find *cities*, *city's* and *cities'*.
- LexisNexis AU will not automatically find the plural form of words that end in "is" and "us", or other irregular plural forms, e.g. *bonus* will not find *bonuses*, *child* will not find *children*. Use the OR connector - *child OR children* - or use the truncation *child!*
- In some cases, the connector is a part of the search term, as in *Occupational Health and Safety*. In order to tell the system to treat the word *and* as a search term and not a connector, you will need to put the phrase in inverted commas: "*Occupational Health and Safety*"
- Connectors operate in the following order: OR – W/n, Pre/n, NOT W/n – W/p – AND – AND NOT. If you use two or more of the same connectors they operate left to right.

More advanced operators

pre/n Specifies that the terms must be within n words of each other. Unlike w/n, the search terms must be in the order you specify. Use this connector when the word order is important.

plural() Specifies you only want the plural or singular version of a word.
singular() **Example:** *singular(job) w/3 discrimination* will find job within three words of discrimination. It will only find the singular (*job*) and not the plural (*jobs*).

The following operators specify the case of your search terms:

caps() Caps() will only find words with a mixture of upper and lower case.

allcaps() Allcaps() will only find words entirely in upper case.

nocaps() Nocaps() will only find words in lower case.

Example: *allcaps(act)* will only find the *ACT* and not the word *act*.

atleastn() Specifies that the word must appear at least n times.

Example: *atleast5(duty of care)* will find documents that mention duty of care at least 5 times.

Finding a list of connectors on LexisNexis AU

For your convenience, the **Search Tips** link is located on every search screen under the **Search Terms** box.

This will provide a list of connectors and operators available to you.

The screenshot shows a search interface with a 'Search Terms' input field and a 'Search' button. Below the input field, there is a list of search tips: 'Enter phrase, eg duty of care, or use connectors to show relationship of terms. Eg surveyor and negligent, contract or agree! (truncated search), internet w/p copyright (within paragraph)'. The 'Search tips' link is circled in red.