

## INFORMATION SKILLS

University Library

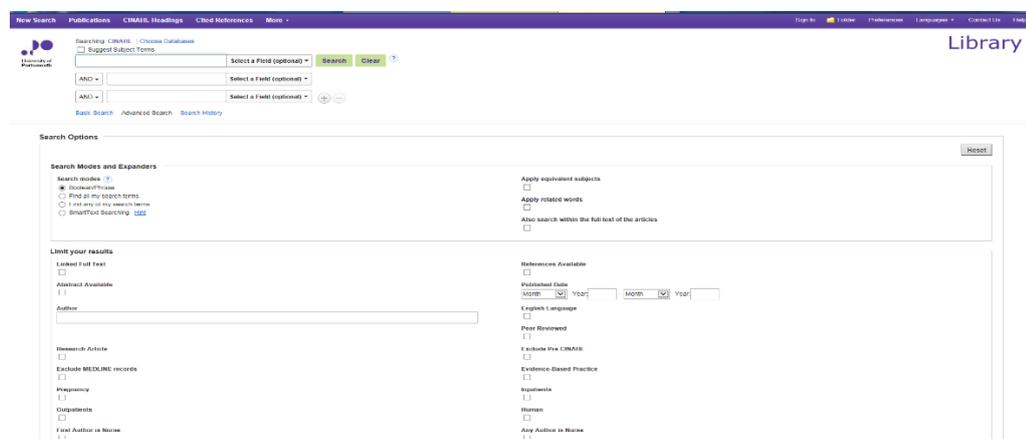
# Searching CINAHL Using Thesaurus Headings

The CINAHL (Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature) database uses the same platform as the University Library's Discovery tool. In addition to basic search and advanced search features this database also allows you to search using a subject specific thesaurus. A thesaurus is a tool that uses a controlled vocabulary to search all the database records. Other databases offering a thesaurus search option include PsycInfo and Medline (also both available on the same platform). In the case of Medline the subject headings are MeSH Headings (the U.S. National Library of Medicine's controlled vocabulary). The subject headings used in CINAHL and PsycInfo relate to those individual databases only.

### Starting off

1. Go to the University Library website <https://library.port.ac.uk>
2. Click on **Resources** and then click on **Databases** on the drop down menu
3. Search for **CINAHL** and select this title on the results page. Alternatively you can search for it using the Discovery or Catalogue search or link to it through your [subject page](#).

The home page for this resource is shown below.



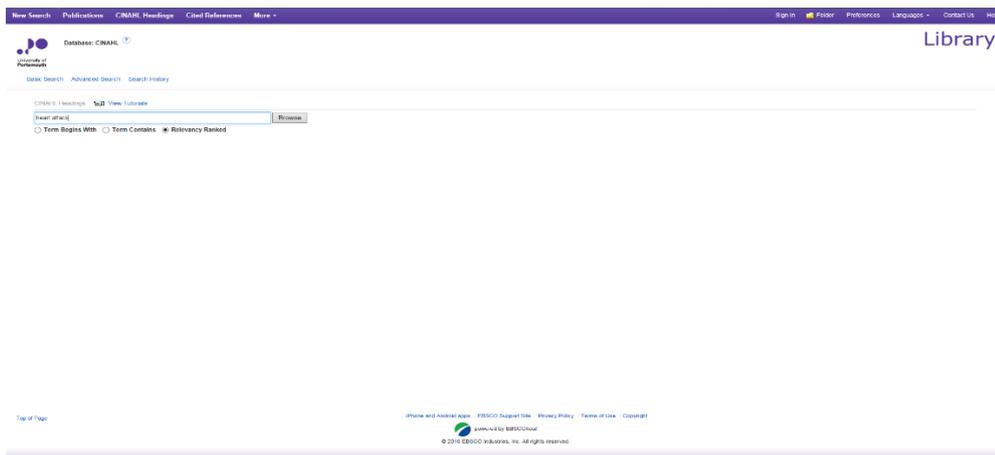
### Searching

The search box at the top of the home screen allows you to search the database using keywords. This is the same as for all resources on the EBSCO platform – for more hints and tips on general searching please refer to the Discovery Library Guide

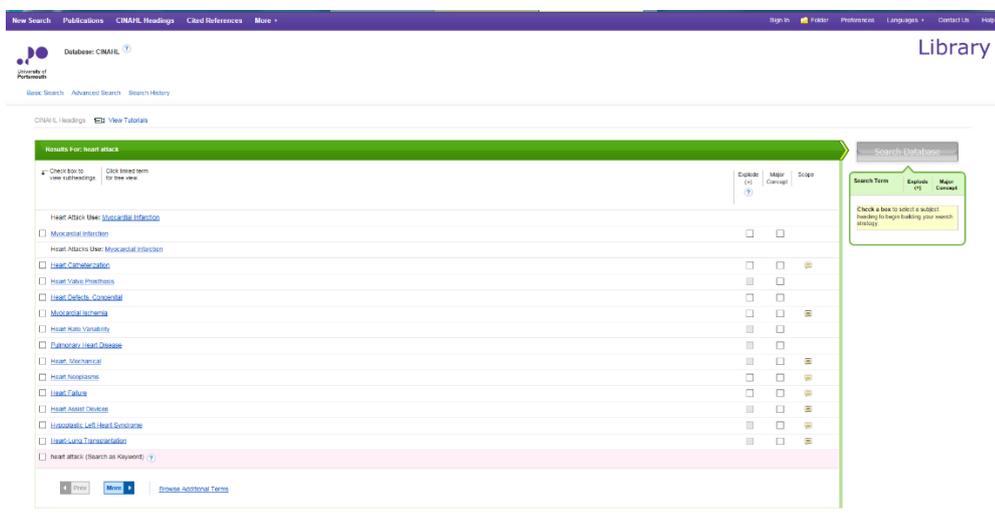
#### How to search using CINAHL Headings

On the CINAHL home search screen select CINAHL Headings from the purple menu bar at the top of the screen.

This takes you to a screen with a single search box. The option for 'Relevancy ranked' will have been automatically selected. You can change this to select 'Term Begins With' or 'Term Contains'.



Type a term into the search box. This term can be the lay term for the medical subject you are interested in e.g. heart attack then press Enter or click on Browse. Your results screen will look something like this:



If you enter a lay term you will be referred to the preferred term within the thesaurus. Clicking on any of the thesaurus terms will open up the tree to which this term belongs showing narrower and broader terms. Clicking on the box to the left of a term will add that term to the box on the right of the screen in preparation for searching the database. At the bottom of the screen is a 'Browse Additional Terms' link, clicking on this will allow you to add more terms to your search. Once you are happy with the terms in the box on the right of the screen click the 'Search Database' button to begin your search. Results will be displayed as per a Discovery search.

If you tick the box to Explode a term your search will retrieve all articles indexed to that term as well as all articles indexed to any narrower subject terms i.e. all of the subject terms that appear lower in the tree than the term you have selected.

If you tick the box for Major Concept your search will only retrieve references for which the subject heading is a major point of the article.

CINAHL is an abstracting and indexing database. It does not contain the full text of journal articles. For many of the references you will be able to either download a PDF, locate the full text within our subscribed journals or link out to publisher websites. For information on how to obtain articles that are not available via the University Library please see information on the InterLibrary Loans Service (<https://library.port.ac.uk/interlib.html>).