

AIRS

Advanced Information Research Skills

AIRS Module 9

Collaborate



Contents



Module 9: Collaborate	2
9.1 Networking	2
In-person networking	2
Online networking	3
9.2 Collaborate with people	4
Finding collaborators at QUT	4
Building your academic profile	5
Databases	5
Academic social networks	5
9.3 Collaborate with data	6
Social bookmarking	6
Sharing references	7
Sharing data	7
9.4 Collaborate with writing	8
Online communication tools	8
Collaborative work spaces	8
All rounder	9



Module 9: Collaborate

COLLABORATING WITH RESEARCHERS

This module explores networks and technologies to support the successful researcher in communicating, writing and researching collaboratively.

9.1 Networking

Networking is the process of cultivating relationships to draw upon the expertise of other people in order to enhance your own research process and impact. In this section you will learn how to network in-person and online with your supervisor or peers at faculty events, conferences, professional organisations and online. Self-promotion improves your global profile as a researcher and opens up many opportunities for further research, invitations to present at conferences or publish in journals.

In-person networking

Supervisor

Your supervisor is your adviser to achieve your research outcome, your mentor and a guide to success beyond your degree. Supervisors are obligated to help you prepare presentations of your research work in faculty seminars, arrange to meet other researchers in your field and attend meetings or conferences. The [QUT Higher Degree Research Guideline](#) details the support you can expect to receive from your supervisor.

Peers

You will benefit from a continuous mutual exchange of ideas with peers and co-workers throughout the duration of your degree. These colleagues bring together a vast amount of knowledge in your discipline so it is important to spend a portion of your research time interacting through casual conversations or formal communications and meetings. Experienced peers can also provide you with guidance on important research activities such as useful software, managing your literature, or conceptualising your research question.

Faculty events

Your faculty will organise a variety of professional events including talks, guest lectures, workshops and conferences. There are also informal social activities that you might attend to extend your range of networks and professional relationships. Many events are advertised via email lists and social media so scan and register for lists and groups that are in your field of research. Even if you

cannot attend all the events, you will keep informed of current topics of interest and how your research aligns with new research directions.

Conferences

Conferences are important opportunities to discuss your research ideas in a wider forum. With the support and guidance of your supervisor, you will submit research papers to conferences and symposia. It is also important to attend conferences to extend your professional networks and to be fully aware of evolving areas of research. Conversing on your topic with a wider range of peers increases the likelihood that your work will be relevant and interesting to your research community.

QUT Library provides access to a variety of databases about conferences or you can use free tools such as AllConferences.com or [Conference Alerts](#).

Professional organisations

Professional organisations facilitate networking via email lists, twitter and other online methods to alert members to events, conferences, newsletters and continuing education opportunities. You may have to pay a yearly fee to be a member of these organisations.

Online networking

There are a variety of ways to network with colleagues online. Well conducted online behaviour may positively affect how employers come to be aware of your work and recognise your potential to become an invaluable member of their team.

Professional website

Creating your own website is a good way to centralise your online presence. Use a website to direct colleagues to your publications, curriculum vitae and social media outlets such as Twitter. Be aware that, in your own online space, you do not officially represent QUT so ensure you remain neutral in your descriptions of yourself and your research and do not speak in any way on behalf of the University.

Blogging

A professional blog of your own or blogs of other researchers is a useful method for conceptualising and exploring your own topic. Be guided by recommendations of your peers, mentors and researchers in which blogs are worthwhile. However, when you contribute to blogs, remember that you have a responsibility to respect the work and views of others and to maintain academic integrity (see module 6. *Acknowledge*) at all times. By tagging the title and contents of your blog posts (e.g. using [Dublin Core](#)), your content can be indexed by search engines thereby ensuring your research can be broadcast to a wider community.

Twitter



[Twitter](#) can be an excellent way to share the latest news and topics in your research with peers. Twitter is best used to summarise ideas interesting to you and to share those with like-minded scholars. Link to recently published articles in your area or your own blog posts to generate interest but do keep your activity professional to assure followers engage with your intellectual ideas.

Facebook



Appropriate use of [Facebook](#) to connect with colleagues and peers is a good way to stay in touch and communicate to a broad community of researchers. Relationships formed at faculty events or conferences can be consolidated via Facebook.

However, while high quality online work may enhance your reputation as a scholar, consider carefully the information you make public. Conduct yourself professionally and represent the work and views of your colleagues respectfully and without prejudice, and ensure your account has the appropriate privacy settings.

Activity – sign up to faculty email lists

1. Email the administrator of your faculty and ensure that you are signed up for email alerts for upcoming faculty events.
2. Search your region for faculties with events relevant to your research interests. Email the faculty administrator requesting to be added to their event email list.

9.2 Collaborate with people

Research is increasingly collaborative and moving into this world can be daunting for a new researcher. This module introduces you to options for identifying and meeting potential collaborators within QUT and around the world via QUT Academic profiles, QUT ePrints, researcher identifiers, researcher databases and academic social networks.

Finding collaborators at QUT

Local collaborators understand your research and institutional context and provide you with immediate access to feedback, support and mentoring.

[QUT Academic Profiles](#) showcases QUT academic staff and you can search by keyword for those with research interests similar to your own.

[QUT ePrints](#) is an openly accessible online digital collection of scholarly publications and other research outputs created by QUT staff and postgraduate students. [Search QUT ePrints](#) for QUT

researchers who have written in your research area.

QUT ePrints opens up a range of collaboration opportunities. Increased visibility increases the likelihood that other researchers will read and cite your journal articles and conference papers. Readers can contact you for more information or to offer research partnerships and opportunities.

Activity – find QUT peers

Search [QUT Academic Profiles](#) and [QUT ePrints](#) for people at QUT who share your research interests.

Building your academic profile

Start to think early about how you will build your profile. Use online tools as discussed, become a player in your field by becoming a member of professional associations, attend conferences, seminars and webinars. Consider creating a Google Scholar author profile to keep track of citations to your articles. You can make your author profile public so that it may appear in Google Scholar results.

Activity – Google Scholar profile

Go to [Google Scholar Citations](#) and create a profile.

Use the following tools to find potential collaborators.

Databases



[Microsoft Academic Search](#) is a free academic search engine where you can search for individual researchers or topics. A feature called [Visual Explorer](#) allows you to visualise the relationships between researchers who have co-authored publications or cited each other. As an author, you can [contribute](#) to Microsoft Academic Search by ensuring your publication data is correct.



[COS Scholar Universe](#) allows you to search for researchers by name or keyword.

Academic social networks



[Academia.edu](#) allows researchers to share papers and track the research of academics they follow, making it a useful tool to locate researchers in your field.



[ResearchGate](#) is mainly focused at scientific researchers. It is a free social networking site for researchers that facilitate collaboration between members. As an author, you can create an individual profile, discuss your work in topic specific Q&A forums, share papers and discover conferences in your field.



[LinkedIn](#) is a networking site of professionals, academics and businesspeople.

Activity – use Microsoft Academic Search

Search for a researcher in your subject area via [Microsoft Academic Search](#). View the co-author graph (if co-author graph is not visible, use the left side navigation to go first to co-author path or citation graph) to view possible collaborators.

9.3 Collaborate with data

Research today involves large amounts of data, numbers, references, images and more. Collaborative research teams need to be able to share the readings they have found, the data they have gathered, and the information they have created. This section covers social bookmarking, reference sharing and data sharing.

Social bookmarking

Social bookmarking allows you to share the websites you find useful or entertaining (as well as letting you access your bookmarks from any computer).



[Pinterest](#) lets you bookmark, tag and summarise websites visually and display them by category.



[Delicious](#) lets you bookmark and tag websites you find useful, share your links with colleagues and use others' tags to explore topics of interest.



[Diigo](#) allows you to highlight, annotate and attach 'sticky notes' to the pages you have bookmarked. You can also use it to organise your notes, pictures and other information.



[CiteULike](#) bookmarklets allow you to easily store articles you read and you can organise and tag them. You can also track other people who are reading the same articles as you and create automated article recommendations.

Activity – social bookmarking

1. Open one of the social bookmarking sites mentioned above or [choose your own](#).
2. Search for keywords that are relevant to your research.
3. Can you find other users who are interested in your area? If so, see what sites they have bookmarked.

Sharing references

A variety of online tools help you share, as well as manage, your scholarly references.

ENDNOTE[®]

Use [EndNote](#) to tag, annotate, organise, share and publicise references relevant to your research.

 **MENDELEY**

Use [Mendeley](#) to set up collaborative projects, work and discuss in groups, and share data.

zotero

Use [Zotero](#) to create shared libraries or publish your library so all researchers can see it.

Sharing data

As well as references and papers, you will have ideas, plans, information, images and research data that you need to share with your colleagues. You may also need to write, read and edit each other's drafts. There are some systems you can use to assist you to share information effectively while overcoming issues relating to limits on attachment file sizes and version control where several people are working on the same files. When sharing data always protect sensitive data by using appropriate security passwords.

OneDrive (staff and students) and Syncplicity (staff only) are the preferred file sharing tools for QUT staff and student use. Information about these tools can be found on the [Digital Workplace](#) and [IT Services](#) websites.



[Cloudstor](#) is designed for short term storage and transfer of large files for members of AARNet (Australian Academic and Research Network) and is useful for those times when your files exceed the data limits for your email. As a member of the QUT research community you have access to Cloudstor using the institutional account. You can save files of up to 100 GB for twenty days and make them available to up to 100 colleagues.

 **Dropbox**

[Dropbox](#) is a freely available web based file hosting service that provides the first 2GB of storage free. Create your own file structure and store digital data or files as you would on your computer. There is also a local client for your desktop computer which allows you to drag and drop files between both systems. This synchronises with the cloud drive so files can be accessed at any computer through the local client or the web browser, smartphone or tablet. Dropbox is easy to use, but always keep several backups of your master documents and data.

9.4 Collaborate with writing

This section will introduce you to a variety of tools to help you write with others.

Online communication tools

Email



Make sure what you write via email is clear, respectful and does not misrepresent others or misinform your recipient. Your QUT email address and your signature is an indicator of your academic reliability and authority. Include the link to your personal [QUT ePrints](#) page in your email signature as this can prompt email recipients to investigate your publications.

Voice

Speaking to a collaborator over the phone can quickly clear up the small confusions and misinterpretations that proliferate in emails. Internet based phone services (VoIP) can save money for long distance calls and may have video capabilities.



[Skype](#) offers free calls between Skype users. It can be installed on mobile phones, computers and laptops. You can also buy credit to make phone calls to landline or mobile phone users who do not utilise Skype.



[Viber](#) is an iPhone application that allows you to make free calls and SMS to other Viber users.

Talking in groups

Many telephones and VoIP services allow conference calls allowing a group of collaborators to discuss their research together. You may also be able to use video conferencing from your desk or mobile phone. QUT offers [videoconferencing](#) facilities at campuses for communicating across two or more locations.

Collaborative work spaces

To write together you need to share and be able to comment on the thoughts and words of your collaborators.

Wikis

Wikis allow you to create, edit and use content together via an ordinary web browser. It is like a web page that you can edit yourselves. You can control who can view, contribute or edit and attach files or images and data.



[QUT Wiki](#) is a secure and powerful workspace that can be used as a complete workspace for your team, including calendars, chat, checklists and news pages. There are many other wiki 'farms' where you can create a wiki for your group. Some offer free access (usually limited) with advertisements, or you can pay for a premium wiki.

SharePoint



QUT currently uses [Microsoft SharePoint](#) as a tool for collaboration. This tool creates a single web based environment that integrates with MS Office applications. It is used for a variety of different purposes to coordinate and communicate within groups and includes version and access control. Currently it is only available to QUT staff but if you are collaborating with a staff member access can be arranged.

Google Groups/Docs/Calendar



[Google](#) has a variety of tools which can be used for collaborative writing. With Google Groups you can create groups for discussion lists and sharing documents. Google Docs allows you to create, share and edit documents, including spreadsheets, presentations and forms. Google Calendar is a free web based calendar (Google Apps offers a subscription service that allows you to share schedules and appointments). Google Groups, Docs and Calendar are all available when you are using your mobile device and you just need to sign in with the same account that you use for Gmail or to manage your Google Scholar preferences.

All rounder



[Wiggio](#) aims to incorporate many of the communication tools that have been detailed in this section. Use Wiggio to form or join multiple groups for virtual meetings, share files and documents, email and message, and share calendars and to-do lists.