Using RefWorks for your systematic review

As well as allowing you to store all the studies you find in one place, RefWorks can also help with the screening of studies and in completing the PRISMA flow diagram to report your review process.

Create a folder

1. Create a folder in RefWorks.
2. Export all the references you have found from each of the databases you have searched. Use the option to include abstracts with your references (if available).
3. The total number of references you have found can be added to the first box in the PRISMA flow diagram.
4. If you have found any references from other sources, export these as well. You may have to manually add some of these.
5. Make a note of how many you add and use this figure for the second box in the flow diagram.

Remove any duplicates from your folder

1. Select the Tools option to find duplicated results and remove these from the folder.
2. Add the number of references you are left with to the third box in the flow diagram.
Title and Abstract screening

1. Create a folder entitled ‘Full Text’ and a folder entitled ‘Excluded’.
2. Go back to your original folder.
3. In the top right-hand corner of the page select Full View. This will let you view the title and abstract of the references you have in the folder.
4. Screen each reference and decide whether you want to keep or exclude the reference.
5. Decide if you want to add each reference to the ‘Full Text’ or Excluded’ folder. This can be done by ticking a reference and selecting the Assign to Folder button.
6. Use the number of references in each folder to add to the flow diagram.

Full Text screening

If possible, obtain the full text of each reference you have in your ‘Full Text’ folder. If you wish you can attach any PDFs you have saved to references in the folder. This can be done by selecting the Add button.

Scan each study and decide if you want to keep it. Those excluded can be added to your ‘Excluded’ folder. This number can be added to the flow diagram.

The references left in your ‘Full Text’ folder will be the number of studies you are going to include in your systematic review, which can be added to the final box in the flow diagram.