The Scoping Process

The scoping process is made up of four main sections, which interlink in a circular way.

1. Formulate your search question.
   - Decide on limits and eligibility criteria (e.g., language, date, geography, age range, ethnicity etc).
2. Break your search question down into searchable concepts.
   - Consider using a framework such as PICO, PESTEL, SPICE, ECLIPS, MIP or SPIDER.
3. Where are you going to search?
   - Consider what types of information you will need.
   - Look at your specialist subject guides for key databases.
   - Identify any other relevant subject databases.
4. Do a scoping search in a few key places.
   - Have you got too many results or not enough?
   - Start to develop a term list for your topic.
   - Re-tweak your search question if necessary by going back to point 1 (formulate your search question).