Records are deduplicated on import to the CRS, but you can also run a deduplication check on any folder of records to catch any duplicates that might have slipped through. It is especially advisable to run a deduplication of any records you intend to submit to CENTRAL, to minimise the number of duplicates in CENTRAL.

To begin the deduplication process, click "Deduplication" on the toolbar:
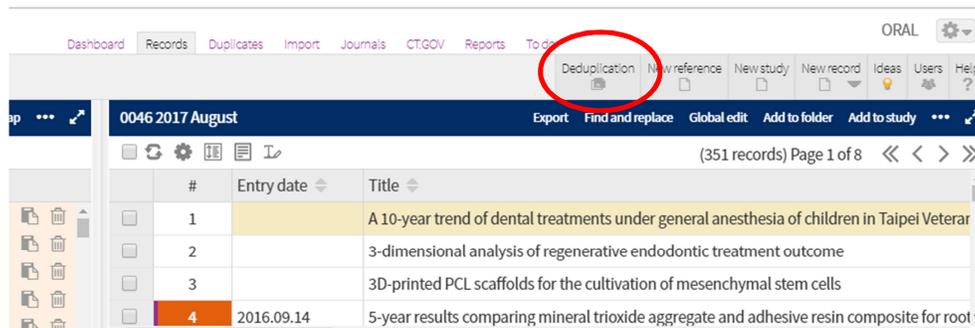
You'll then be presented with some options for choosing a filter to deduplicate with. There are several built in options, or you can create your own. There is another video and PDF on how to do this.
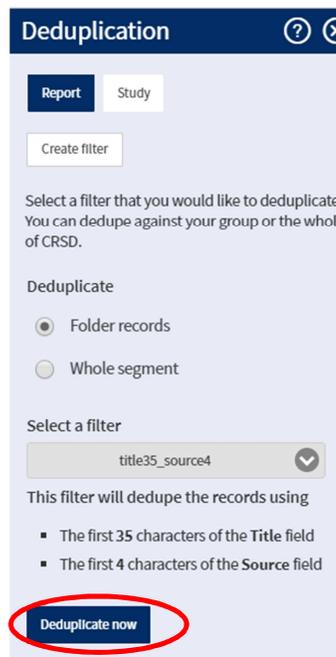
You can choose to deduplicate on reference records (click Report), or study records, and you can deduplicate your whole segment, or just the folder you are working with. If you want a very sensitive deduplication, Title 35 is a good option. This deduplicates on the first 35 characters of the title, but you might find you get a lot of false positives using this option. Less sensitive options might include deduplicating on the title and author; or the title and source. But it's a good idea to experiment and see which filters work best for you.

When you have chosen the option you want from the drop down menu, click "Deduplicate now". This may take some minutes depending on the number of records involved.

The deduplication process is run against the whole of the CRS.

Once you have run the deduplication process, any potential matches will pop up side-by-side. The record on the left is the record in the folder, which is the one you are deduplicating against.

If the record is NOT a duplicate, you can mark it as such by choosing "Not a duplicate", which appears above the right hand record. The records will then not be matched again in future.

If the record IS a duplicate, you can merge the two (or more) records together. Any fields that are different will display in red, but if you'd prefer to keep the information in that field instead, simply click it and the field will turn white. The default is to keep the field with the most text, which may not always be appropriate, so always check the fields carefully. When you are happy, click "Merge records", and the two (or more) will merge together.

From this screen, you can also see if the record is already in your register, in PubMed or Embase, to help you decide which fields to keep.

You can navigate through the records by clicking on the arrows above the left hand record, and you can display all the fields in the record by clicking "Show all fields". Otherwise, the displayed fields will just be the basic bibliographic information.
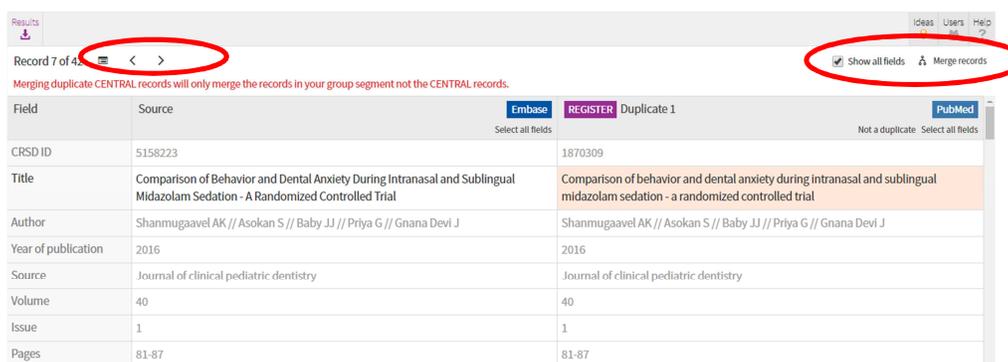
When you have finished deduplicating, you will get a summary of the changes you have made, with the merged records in blue and the "Not a duplicate" records in grey:

You may get the message: "Too many duplicates have been found for this record to be displayed in the deduplication screen." If this happens, you might want to try using a less sensitive deduplication, to capture these records. Another message that might come up is "One or more of these records contain duplicate group records. These must be dealt with before you can action the duplicate records found". There is a separate video on how to deal with these records, which are legacy records from CRS Stand-Alone.

If you have any questions about deduplicating in the CRS, contact cis-support@cochrane.org