

# Evaluating Research Journals for Quality: Tools and Tips.

Ongoing quest for discipline-specific ranking for measuring 'esteem' or quality

Some Tools and Tips

- Journal Citation Reports database
- Publishing for Academic Journals for Education & Q Score
- Critical evaluation
- Publisher websites

## Journal Citation Reports

Provides annual rankings of 8000 journals (1800+ are social sciences) by:

- number of articles published
- how often journal cited
- 'impact factor'
- immediacy (currency) of research

Library Website > Databases and Articles > Journal Citation Reports > Connect

- 2 editions (Science, Social Sciences)
- Year is Year under review
- Categories – Education (Science edition); Education and Ed Research; Social Work

Results List

- Initially by journal title
- Can re-sort by: current articles, total cites, immediacy, **impact factor**

Details example: *Review of Educational Research*

- Multiple measures of performance, including graphs for times cited, times citing
- **Impact factor = cites to recent items / number of recent items** [recent = 2 or 5 years *previous* to review year]

General

- *Ranking* = higher the better
- *Within* the JCR database only
- Can get *category*-based measures for comparing a journal to similar ones
- Statistics have to be *contextualised* eg length of scholarly publication cycles; discipline-specific factors; could be cited because *not* good...
- *Assistance* – 'Help' within JCR; Online Tutorial and guides (Connect page); Subject librarian

## PAJE & “Q Score”

**Publishing in Academic Journals for Education** [PAJE] website and publications - produced by the Centre for the Study of Research Training and Impact [SORTI], University of Newcastle, Australia

- peer-reviewed, English language research journals in the field of Education
- Weighted towards educators' views
- 1042 journals (20% also have Journal Citation Reports impact factor i.e. cross-over not high)
- Produces Q Score rankings – composite index. Based on ‘**esteem percentage**’ [ex survey data], **impact factor** (if present) and international **makeup of Editorial Board**
- Q Score ranges from 0 – 29.33
- Can sort by category

### General

- PAJE information <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/sorti/paje/index.html>
- Useful material in SORTI publications <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/sorti/publications/research-quality-environment.html>

## Critical Evaluation

Just suggestions and tools... may or may not be helpful in your situation. Your own judgement and that of your peers...

SORTI suggests asking how closely your research matches the journal's profile.

Have a clear sense of the journal's:

- audience
- scope and guidelines
- ability to deliver visibility (publisher profile, indexing capability)
- quality of Editorial Board and peer-review process
- citation statistics if available

## Publisher Sites

Use Google to locate!

e.g. British Educational Research Journal <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/01411926.html>

- Aims & Scope
- Abstracting & Indexing
- Editorial Board
- Associations
- Related Websites
- Instructions for Authors
- Tables of Contents (previous)

## References

Fairbairn , H., Holbrook, A., Bourke, S., Preston, G., Cantwell, R., & Scevak, J. (2009). A profile of education journals. In P. Jeffrey (Ed.) *AARE 2008 Conference Papers Collection [Proceedings]*. Retrieved 7<sup>th</sup> May from <http://www.aare.edu.au/08pap/fai08605.pdf>

Holbrook, A., Bourke, S., Preston, G., Cantwell, R., & Scevak, J.(2007). Education journal banding project. A collaborative project undertaken by SORTI in association with the AARE. Paper presented at the *Australian Association for Research in Education Focus Conference: Education, Innovation and research strategies for capacity building*, Canberra, 13 -14 June. Retrieved 10<sup>th</sup> May from <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research-centre/sorti/resources/files/AARE%20Focus%2007%20web.pdf>

Sumison, J., McMaugh, A., & Saltmarsh, D. (2008). Ranking teacher education journals. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* 36(1), 1-3.

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## Need more help?

Library > Resources by Subject > Education > Handouts > Evaluating Journals

Or contact the following Sylvia Ashton-Warner Library Information Services Team members.

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