Quality over quantity: building an online resource for researchers

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High Quality Journal Lists Project

• What is the high quality journal lists project?
• Context of the project
• How the lists were created
• Feedback
• Statistics
• Future plans
High Quality Journal Lists Project

Purpose

The aim of the Library’s Scholarly Communication & Publication project is to assist in improving the quality of research publication across the University and to raise awareness about the changing scholarly publication landscape.

In conjunction with the Office of Research the College Librarians will assist College staff by providing guidance about where to publish. By working collaboratively with the research community the Library is developing awareness across the University about scholarly publication including the rapid growth of peer-reviewed, Open Access publishing.

The College Librarians will be doing this by identifying appropriate publications which will assist academics to easily target top ranked journals in their field for their research outputs.

The results of the Scholarly Communication & Publication project will be:

- Analysis of the list of journals where CURRENT researchers in the College of Sport and Exercise Science published 2010-2012 mapped to SCImago quartile rankings and ERA 2012 FOR codes.
- Compilation of discipline-specific lists of quality journal titles based on ERA 2012 FOR codes and SCImago rankings relevant to College.
- Identification of relevant, quality Open Access Journals.

Additional Information

The library provides various resources to assist College staff with publishing:

- Scholarly Publishing
- Measuring Research Impact

Office of Research

Link to the Office of Research
- Research Office

Contact

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But how is this project innovative?

What is innovation?

“An idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual” Rogers (2003)

An idea doesn’t need to be groundbreaking to be innovative – it’s all contextual

Haven’t discovered any academic library that is doing this
The Context at VU

In the first year of the project one College produced 244 articles of which 41% were published in unranked journals.

These figures represent the magnitude of the problem VU faces.

The University is not in a position to waste scarce resources on substandard output.

A brief breakdown of the Scimago rankings show for 2012:

- Total number of titles = 244
- Percentage with Q1 ranking = 8.6% (21)
- Percentage with Q2 ranking = 15.2% (37)
- Percentage with Q3 ranking = 16.4% (40)
- Percentage with Q4 ranking = 18.8% (46)
- Percentage with N/A* ranking = 41.0% (100)

* = not listed in Scimago
Why do universities care about the quality of their research output?

Research quality = prestige

Student choice influenced by the prestige of University

Student choice = $$$
The university sector is in turmoil...

And meanwhile at VU...not the university of first choice – we struggle to attract and retain students

We have less money from the government and enrolments are down despite growing demand for university education...
VU Library

VU is attempting to shore up its financial position by reducing costs

The staffing level in the VU Library has been cut by one third in the last 3 years!

We need to do more with less

As a result of the University’s concerted push to raise it’s research profile demand for research support has gone up

Demand up (research support) and supply down (staff)
We are addressing a gap

What we know about research at VU:

• We have a research culture that focuses on quantity not quality

• We’re heavily reliant on a small pool of researchers to produce quality

• Absence of strong research culture

Other findings:

• Charles Darwin University found nearly half (46.4%) of their ECRs need help developing the skills to find relevant journals to publish in

• That researchers work in a digital environment and will seek information online

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How the lists were created

There were two lists we wanted to create

1. A list of high quality journals for each discipline area

   To make this we needed a list of high quality journals = we used ERA 2012

   To measure the quality we used SCImago quartile rankings

2. A list of where our researchers currently publish

   We used the HERDC lists and combined these with SCImago

These lists were created by combining Excel spread sheets
How the lists were created

The College Librarians consulted with key stakeholders in the different Colleges to find out which Fields of Research (FoR) codes were relevant.

The LibGuides were created and relevant content added.

Despite our intention to focus on Q1 journals we found it necessary to include both Q1 and Q2 titles in the social science and humanities (Arts, Education & Business). Otherwise the range of choices was too limited.

Once the consultation process was completed the College specific high quality journal lists were compiled using LibGuides.
What the feedback revealed

1. Where is my journal?

2. Why is my journal ranked differently in SCImago?

3. But we use a different ranking system!

4. The rankings in SCImago fluctuate too much!

5. The coverage of law journals is poor!
LibGuide Statistics

What does this tell us about how the page is being used?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All Guides</th>
<th>Page Views</th>
<th>Links</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Page Name</td>
<td>Views</td>
</tr>
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<td>4739084 Home</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>4082203 ABDC Journals List</td>
<td>318</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>4739088 Journals where staff currently publish</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>4759928 Business and Management</td>
<td>135</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>4739091 Banking, Finance and Investment</td>
<td>107</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>4759988 Accounting, Auditing And Accountability</td>
<td>106</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>4768961 Economics</td>
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</tr>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>4768976 Marketing</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>4709947 Commerce, Management, Tourism And Services</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>4768984 Policy and Administration</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How do we measure success?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Journal title</th>
<th>SCImago quartile</th>
<th>Number articles published</th>
<th>SCImago Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACI Structural Journal</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Civil and Structural Engineering (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Mathematical Modelling</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Applied Mathematics (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Optics</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Atomic and Molecular Physics, and Optics (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Physics Letters</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Physics and Astronomy (miscellaneous) (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automatics</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Electrical and Electronic Engineering (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bioresource Technology</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Environmental Engineering (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin of the Seismological</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Geophysics (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society of America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geochemistry and Petrology (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrate Polymers</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Polymers and Plastics (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carbon</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Organic Chemistry (Q1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Engineering Research and</td>
<td>Q1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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Where to next?

- Learn from our mistakes
- Promote new content when it's added
- Provide yearly snapshot to track our progress
- Part of broader strategy to raise the quality of VU's research output
- Have patience because it's an incremental process

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Thank you for listening

Any Questions?