Journal Citation Reports

How to find out the impact factor of journals in your subject area.
The most important social science and science journals are listed in the Journal Citation Reports, which are updated every summer. JCR uses citation data to give journals an impact factor showing a title’s relative importance when compared to others in the same field. It is therefore a valuable tool when deciding which journals to publish work in and can be useful in the run up to the REF.

- Access JCR through the Web of Knowledge gateway at http://wok.mimas.ac.uk/
- Click on the green button “Access Web of Knowledge”. You will need your personal Athens username.
- Click on the yellow tab “Additional Resources”.
- Click on Journal Citation Reports.
- Select Science or Social sciences edition 2009 AND select View a group of journals by subject category.
- Select a subject subdivision & make sure View journal data is selected.

As it takes time to compile the database a new year’s data usually appears around the end of June. 2010 data will probably arrive in June 2011.

- The journals are listed alphabetically initially. Use the “Sorted by” drop down menu, select Impact Factor and notice which journals come to the top of the list.

**Definition:** The journal impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year. The impact factor will help you evaluate a journal’s relative importance, especially when you compare it to others in the same field. [JCR]

- Change the sort option to 5-year impact factor and click Sort again. This is a new facility on JCR. It is useful because it gives a better indicator of the performance of journals within fields where influence of published research evolves over a longer period of time than presented by the traditional 2 year impact.

**Multi-disciplinary journals which appear in more than one subject category in JCR.**
In order to see the influence of a journal in all its assigned categories look at the “Rank in category table”:

- Click on the abbreviated journal title in the Journal summary list for example, for Child Dev.
- Then click on the Journal ranking button:

  Journal Rank in Categories: [JOURNAL RANKING]

The journal ranking table is displayed at the top of the page:

For 2009, the journal CHILD DEVELOPMENT has an Impact Factor of **3.631**
This table shows the ranking of this journal in its subject categories based on Impact Factor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category Name</th>
<th>Total Journals in Category</th>
<th>Journal Rank in Category</th>
<th>Quartile in Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYCHOLOGY, DEVELOPMENTAL</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Q1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYCHOLOGY, EDUCATIONAL</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Q1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Self-citations
Journal self-citation is not inherently “bad” practice:
- Authors cite related research and this may have been published in the same journal as one would wish to publish in.
- However, 80% of all journals listed in JCR have self-citation rates of less than 20%. Based on trends within a category we can get an idea of what may be excessive self-citation which weakens the integrity of the journal’s impact factor.

For example: *Child Development* - 5% of citations to it are self-cites.
*European child & adolescent psychiatry* = 9%

**JCR Glossary**

**Rank** Journal rank according to the selected sort option.
**Abbreviated Journal Title** which links to information about the journal.
**ISSN** International Standard Serial Number.
**Total Cites** Total number of times a journal has been cited by all journals included in the database within the current product year.
**Impact Factor** This provides a way to evaluate or compare a journal’s relative importance to others in the same field. This is done by measuring the frequency with which the average article in a journal has been cited within a particular year.
**5 year impact factor** – for some subject areas the impact factor over a longer period of time can be useful.
**Immediacy Index** This measures how quickly the average article in a journal is cited, or how often articles published in a journal are cited within the same year. It is useful for comparing journals specialising in cutting-edge research.
**Articles** This measures the number of articles published in a journal in a particular year (original research and review articles only.)
**Cited Half-Life** The cited half-life is the number of publication years from the current year, which account for 50% of current citations received. This option benchmarks the age of cited articles. It is a useful in collection management and archiving decisions by showing the age of the majority of cited articles published in a journal.
**Eigenfactor score** – another method of ranking the importance of a journal. This gives more weighting to citations from highly ranked journals than from lower ranked ones so works out differently from the impact factor. More information at www.eigenfactor.org.
**Article influence score** – uses the Eigenfactor score and scales it by the number of articles published in the journal to achieve a similar calculation to the impact factor.