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The Australasian Journal of Educational Technology (AJET) is a refereed research journal published 5-6 times per year by the Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education (ascilite). AJET retired its printed version (ISSN 1449-3098) at the end of Volume 23, 2007, and from Volume 24, 2008, the journal is open access, online only (ISSN 1449-5554), and does not have paid subscriptions.
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Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education

Same places, different spaces
AJET’s acceptance rate: A regional analysis

Table 1 and Figure 1 provide an update on our routine monitoring of AJET’s acceptance rate by region or country, last reported in AJET Editorial 23(4) [1]. To compare the overall acceptance rate for the six years 2003-2008, 28.9%, with rates for individual years, refer to Editorial 25(2) [2].

Table 1: AJET acceptance % calculated on sums 2003-2008, ranked by region or country

<table>
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<th>Region or country</th>
<th>Number submitted</th>
<th>Number accepted</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>03</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZ, Sth Pacific</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK and Europe</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA, Canada</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Asia</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asia</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other America</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aust is Australia only; Sth Pacific includes Papua New Guinea; SE Asia includes Thailand; East Asia includes Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea; Other Asia includes India, Bangladesh, Pakistan; Middle East includes Turkey, Israel; Africa includes Mauritius; UK and Europe includes Eastern Europe, Russia, Cyprus, Georgia; Other America includes Mexico, Caribbean countries, Central and South America.

Figure 1: Number of rejections and acceptances from AJET submissions, 2003-2008 (Regions are as defined for Table 1. See AJET Editorial 23(4) [1] for the 2003-2006 version)
In Editorial 23(4) [1] we advanced the following conclusions from the 2003-2006 data:

... there is a very large, regionally correlated variation in the ratio of acceptances (upper part of each bar) to rejections (lower part of each bar). It indicates quite forcefully that we will have to work harder on securing more acceptances of papers from the regions of the world that are the basis for AJET's aspirations to be a front ranked international journal with an Australasian character. [1]

We regret that Figure 1 offers only meagre evidence of progress towards the goal implied in Editorial 23(4). As stated in that Editorial [1]:

... there is much effort going into formative advice to authors on how to improve their research projects and papers for an international academic readership, especially helping authors with a LOTE background. [1]

Nevertheless, this effort continues. Whilst much of the work in advising authors about how to improve their research plans, execution and reporting is undertaken by AJET's Editorial staff, we are very grateful to our Review Panel [3] for the generous amount of time devoted by many members to composing the formative advice that accompanies a "Reject" or "Invite resubmission for a new review after major revisions" notification. [4]

---


Report on progress with Abstracted & Indexed In ...

This report has been prepared for AJET's Management Committee, Editorial Board, ascilite Members, and readers and authors generally, partly in response to questions directed to AJET's editorial staff, for example as illustrated in the following two excerpts from recent correspondence:

> This quick email is to ask if AJET is still an ISI rated journal? [5]

The brief answer to your question asking "... if AJET is still an ISI rated journal?" is "I'm sorry, I do not know". In April 2007 we received ... [6]

> I am having trouble locating the impact factor of the AJET. Can you point me in the right direction? [7]


Thus a report on progress with Abstracted & Indexed In ... seems timely. This phrase is taken from a heading in AJET Editorial 24(2) [8], for a background information item

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"In dreams begins responsibility": Choices, evidence, and change
Manchester, UK, 8-10 September 2009
http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2009/
concerned with a simple classification of abstracting and indexing services. In particular, we can review the experiences referred to cryptically and regretfully in that Editorial’s Table 4 as “Time to ‘deal with’…”.

Firstly, Thomson Reuters and AJET. To summarise briefly, for a number of years (2004-2007) we provided ISI/ISI Thomson with complimentary copies of AJET’s printed edition, until AJET became open access only, online only at the beginning of 2008 [9]. As recorded in AJET Editorial 23(2), “For nearly three years, we received no response” [6]. Then we received the email noted in that Editorial, but a year elapsed before we received further advice, as we noted (with some exasperation) in Editorial 24(5) [10]. Then we encountered another gap in communication, notwithstanding the five 2008-2009 emails to Thomson Reuters logged in our running file on this matter [11]. Finally, on a sixth attempt, via a facility on the Thomson Reuters website, we received two responses by email [12], one containing the advice:

> Once your journal became online-access-only our processing departments have had to evaluate the technicalities of including it in our database. This evaluation is not finished. As soon as it is completed, we will either begin to process the journal beginning with the 2008 issues and forward, or we will notify you that we cannot work with it. Unfortunately we cannot give you a date for the end of the evaluation.

> Thank you so much for all of your cooperation and communication. We look forward to moving ahead with this coverage as soon as possible. [13]

We responded to this quickly with a helpful lead on the "technicalities":

> Many thanks for the response, I was so uncertain about how to get things moving!

> What may be very helpful is the provision of advice on what is being evaluated in relation to “the technicalities of including it in our database”. I cannot find anything in the TR website, but I would expect that along with many others (ERIC, EBSCO, etc) TR seeks an “FTP push” (i.e. I upload files to your FTP site, when each issue is published) with PDF as the preferred format for files. Could you or someone in TR confirm that please? Then I will know the specifications to conform with. [14]

However, as Thomson Reuters stated, “… we cannot give you a date…” [13], so we will have to wait. A similar uncertainty about the “Time to …” arises in the second abstracting and indexing service considered in this report, Elsevier’s Scopus [15].
An account of AJET’s relations with Scopus was provided in AJET Editorial 23(3), also showing some exasperation [16]. As the communications reported in that Editorial are over two years ago, it’s time for another update. We examined some relevant information from the Scopus website, specifically “New titles to be added in 2009” [17] and “List of Open Access titles” [18]. AJET does not appear, but the “New titles” file indicates that Scopus has been very busy indeed with expansion. New titles (total 757 listed) and open access titles (total 1212 listed) for journals found with searches in these files for Australian and Australasian include the following:

From ‘New titles’ [17]
Australasian Marketing Journal
Australasian Journal of Combinatorics
Australasian Journal of Ecotoxicology
Australasian Journal of Gifted Education
Australasian Journal of Special Education
Australasian Plant Disease Notes
Australian Business Law Review
Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences
Australian Journal of Crop Science
Australian Journal of Emergency Management
Australian Journal of Environmental Education
Australian Journal of Teacher Education
Australian Journal of Water Resources
Australian Journal on Volunteering
Australian Law Journal
Australian Review of Applied Linguistics
Australian Slavonic and East European Studies
Critical and Creative Thinking (Publisher: Federation of Australian Philosophy in Schools [sic] Associations
Curriculum Perspectives (Publisher: Australian Curriculum Studies Association Inc.)
Family Matters (Publisher: Australian Institute of Family Studies)
Higher Education Research and Development
Journal of Smoking Cessation (Publisher: Australian Academic Press)
Journal of Australian Studies
Journal of Christian Education (Publisher: Australian Christian Forum on Education Inc.)
Journal of the Australian and New Zealand Student Services Association
Mathematics Education Research Journal (Publisher: Mathematics Education Research Group of Australasia, Inc.)
Nuytsia (Publisher: Western Australian Herbarium, Dept of Environment & Conservation)
Open Museum Journal (Publisher: Australian Museums On Line)

From ‘OA titles’ [18]
Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies
Australia and New Zealand Health Policy
Australian Educational Researcher
AJET’s running file on Scopus listing commences with our first use of their "Title suggestion form" [19] on 23 January 2006. For three years AJET has not succeeded in joining the large number of journals listed above, though we have tried most years. Of course, it would be invidious and inappropriate for us to attempt "merit comparisons" between AJET and the journals listed above (heck, I had to look up Wikipedia for "Combinatorics"! [20]). However, we could flag for attention some further monitoring and reporting upon AJET’s positioning (or lack thereof) with Scopus, and (as some may be thinking) we will consider (just in case) a more disciplined, more circumspect moderation of our analyses of the Abstracted & Indexed In ... scene. Better to be listed than blacklisted :-) Perhaps in 2010 we will be able to use the "This title is now indexed in Scopus" graphic that Scopus provides on its website [21].

Readers engaged in educational research may not be aware that Scopus has secured a role as the Australian Research Council’s citation supplier, "... ERA citation data supplier for Cluster One—Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences (PCE)" [22]. Will Elsevier’s Scopus supplant Thomson Reuters, owners of the Impact Factor, in a bibliometrics dogfight? To illustrate very briefly with two quotations:

Today, bibliometrics programs with large teams of analysts are firmly established in many nations, and these groups issue bibliometric reports, often called science indicators studies, at regular intervals. A few such groups are the National Science Foundation (United States); the ... ... Other nations with active bibliometrics groups include Argentina, Australia, .... In almost all cases, the publication and citation data of Thomson Reuters form the basis of their bibliometric analyses. [23]

Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature and quality web sources with smart tools to track, analyze and visualize research. ... improves research productivity and effectiveness by offering, among other features ... ... Scopus Affiliation Identifier to automatically identify and match an organization with all its research output ... Scopus Citation Tracker to simply find, check and track citation data year by year and in real-time ... The h-index as a means to evaluate research performance, complemented by unique graphs [24]
ACEC2010: DiGiTAL DIVERSITY CONFERENCE
Australia's ICT Education Conference for All Educators
Melbourne, 6-9 April 2010 http://acec2010.info/

There is a growing body of Australian based research into the use of bibliometrics to inform research quality assessment exercises, for example Jarwal, Brion and King (2008) in their recent article titled "Measuring research quality using the journal impact factor, citations and 'ranked journals': Blunt instruments or inspired metrics?" [25]. However, there seems to be little research into the processes that are followed by the publishers and others who select the journal lists that are the starting points for impact factor calculations, citation counts and rankings of journals.

The third matter to report is the outcome from AJET’s negotiations with Gale Cengage Learning, which sought a "Data Distribution and Content License Agreement" with your journal. Gale produce a number of databases [26]. We sought something similar to AJET’s agreements with EBSCO [27] and ERIC [28], which in essence enable AJET articles to be included in their database products, for search purposes, with full text delivery (should a reader wish to obtain full text for an article found by searching the database) provided by a hypertext link to AJET’s website, not by the database server. In this model, no royalty is charged, no earnings (other than annual subscription, in the case of EBSCO). However, Gale appeared to be seeking additional income (to be divided between Gale and AJET) for delivering AJET articles from Gale’s servers. An additional clause wanted by AJET was not acceptable to Gale, and therefore no agreement was reached. This clause was:

19. This addendum is inserted at the Publisher’s request to make it explicitly clear that “Royalties and payments” Clauses 3.a to 3.d are declined. Users of “Databases, Products, and Services” (Section 1.a) are not to be charged for retrieving an AJET article they may have found via a Gale product, notwithstanding anything said in previous sections of this agreement. [29]

Clause 19, quoted above had the same intent as AJET’s copyright statement:

In accordance with open access principles, it is the intention of AJET and AJET’s authors that no charges be levied upon readers or educational institutions by royalty or copyright fee collection agencies, or by database vendors, for reader access to AJET’s online, free to the Internet articles. [30]

AJET does not wish to receive any royalties because if we went down that pathway we would lose our RoMEO Green open access status [31]. As full open access is our primary differentiation from our main competitors (listed in Editorial 24(4) [32]), we pursue that path vigorously.

To conclude on a more positive note, we are very pleased to report that AJET file uploads to ERIC [28] for their indexing and abstracting service commenced on 9 February 2009, with Volume 24 (2008) uploaded. As noted in AJET Editorial 23(2) [33], AJET’s communications with ERIC commenced in November 2000. Whilst that is a long time to ‘deal with’, ERIC underwent a major internal reorganisation taking
several years during that period. Other uploads that are now part of the AJET production routine include EBSCO (commenced 22 January 2008 with Volume 24), and Taylor & Francis (for Educational Research Abstracts [34], abstract only uploads commenced 10 March 2003). The production routine also includes an ‘alert’ message to ACER's Cunningham Library for the Australian Education Index [35].

Idle Moment 36: JALN abandons open access

A good amount of non-idle time is devoted to checking references during the copy editing phase for each article that AJET has accepted. Checking references can be rather time consuming, partly because often there are numerous errors in a list, and because it's tempting to switch from ‘editing mode’ to ‘reading mode’. During a recent lapse into ‘reading mode’ I (RJA) was rather surprised to find that JALN (Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks) [36] has abandoned open access, perhaps at the end of 2008. The change to subscription only access appears to have been applied retrospectively to all issues from 1(1), March 1997 to the current issue, 13(1), 2009. There appears to be no editorial statement explaining the change of policy.

However, non-subscribers may still be lucky. JALN’s change from open access has not been rigorously implemented upon every file. Whilst URLs having the formats: http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/jaln/vxny/vxny_author.asp or http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/jaln/vxny/vxny_author_member.asp lead to a subscribers only barrier, the format: http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/jaln/vxny/pdf/vxny_author.pdf is likely to succeed, at least for volumes prior to 12, and until 4 July 2009. (where ‘x’ is volume no., ‘y’ is issue no. and ‘author’ is first author’s surname). Unfortunately, AJET authors and the Production Editor in the past have tended to cite the format ‘vxny/vxny_author.asp’, instead of ‘vxny/pdf/vxny_author.pdf’ for JALN references. Now, nearly all AJET articles that cite a JALN article contain a broken hypertext link.

Authors of JALN articles are required to assign copyright to JALN’s publisher, the Sloan Consortium, and self archiving is not permitted [37]. Perhaps JALN needs to work a bit more upon communicating its policy changes. Using Google Scholar [38] the following statement of JALN policy turned up, commendable in our view, but sadly it is quite out of date for the new JALN:

Open Access Policy
This journal provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge. [39]

Roger Atkinson and Catherine McLoughlin
AJET Production Editor and AJET Editor

Endnotes

5. Email from Professor Alan Ainsworth, University of Johannesburg, relayed by Professor Ron Oliver, Edith Cowan University, to the Production Editor, 11 June 2009.
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12. AJET Production Editor's text only running file '11may09 follow up succeeds'.
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