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The *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology* (AJET) is a refereed research journal published 8 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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## Editorial 28(8)

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### AJET's ranking: Citation-based bibliometrics

This part of Editorial 28(8) is unusual, perhaps *very unusual*, because its purpose is to update an AJET data table that was provided to ascilite's President, Dr Caroline Steel, for President's Report 2012 [1]. The *very unusual* part arose from the item "BJET Announcement: Amendment to 2011 Impact Factor", that appeared sometime in the second half of 2012 on the *British Journal of Educational Technology* website [2]:

Following an appeal, Thomson Reuters have formally amended the 2011 Impact Factor for BJET:

Amended Impact Factor: 2.098

Amended Ranking: 12/203 Education & Educational Research

This compares to 1.539 in the initial release, and a ranking of 24/203.

Quoted below, a copy of the AJET Production Editor's 2012 advice to the ascilite President for her 2012 report [1], with an updated version of the matter now needing an update, namely Table 1:

This section, compiled by retiring Production Editor Roger Atkinson, summarises AJET's current position relative to its major competitors, according to a number of citation-based bibliometrics, including the 2011 values for one of the most influential, the Thomson Reuters *Impact Factor* (Table 1). Whilst AJET's 2011 *Impact Factor*, 1.517, is down slightly compared with 2010 (1.655), it compares well with 2009 (1.278), and AJET remains well-ranked on the "ladder" of international educational technology journals (Table 1). AJET is also well-ranked amongst educational research journals generally, as may be seen from a wider searching of *SCImago Journal Rankings* and *Google Scholar Metrics*. However, there is a need to sustain the momentum that has been nurtured for some years, towards building the loyalty of researchers who will read AJET articles and cite AJET articles in their own submissions of work, whether to AJET or to a competitor journal. Following the demise of the Australian Research Council's *Tiers for the Australian Ranking of Journals* in mid-2011 (see Notes for Table 1), Australian researchers are likely, over time, to accord more attention to journal rankings derived from citation count-based bibliometric data, in contrast to rankings based upon other methodologies or unspecified methodologies (as occurred with *Tiers*) relating to "reputation".

Increased attention to citation based bibliometrics may prove to have two positive effects. Firstly, this trend could give more weight to the views of a broader and larger community, extending far beyond a journal's editorial staff and their immediate community, such as an editorial board and a sponsoring society's membership.



<http://www.ascilite.org.au/index.php?p=conference>

Secondly, bibliometric data can provide authors, readers and editorial staff with benchmarks or "key performance indicators" that can be valuable for refining perspectives and views that may otherwise be excessively dependent upon more subjective impressions. In particular, new perspectives will become available from systematic analyses of submission demographics, and from rigorous quantitative and qualitative studies of aspiring author behaviours. [1]

Table 1: Comparing *Impact Factor* and *Tiers* rankings for some peer journals

Journal	<i>Impact Factor</i> (a)	<i>IF</i> rank order (b)	<i>Tiers</i> 2010 (c)	SJR(d) Q(rank)	GSM h5-index(e)	URL for obtaining <i>Impact Factor</i>
Computers & Education	Yes	1 (same as 2010)	A	0.056 Q1 (21)	58	<a href="http://www.journals.elsevier.com/computers-and-education/">http://www.journals.elsevier.com/computers-and-education/</a>
British J. of Educational Technology	Yes	2 (same as 2010)	A	0.045 Q1 (44)	36	<a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8535">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8535</a>
Instructional Science	Yes	3 (up one from 2010)	A	0.042 Q1 (55)	21	<a href="http://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/learning+%26+instruction/journal/11251">http://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/learning+%26+instruction/journal/11251</a>
Australasian J. of Educ. Technology	Yes 1.517	4 (down one from 2010)	B	0.041 Q1 (64)	23	<a href="http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/">http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/</a>
J. of Computer Assisted Learning	Yes	5 (same as 2010)	A	0.051 Q1 (27)	33	<a href="http://au.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-JCAL.html">http://au.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-JCAL.html</a>
Educational Technology, Res & Devt	Yes	6 (same as 2010)	A	0.043 Q1 (52)	28	<a href="http://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/learning+%26+instruction/journal/11423">http://www.springer.com/education+%26+language/learning+%26+instruction/journal/11423</a>
Educational Technology & Society	Yes	7 (same as 2010)	B	0.038 Q1 (84)	27	<a href="http://www.ifets.info/">http://www.ifets.info/</a>
Research in Learning Technology	No	Not ranked	A	Not listed	Not listed	<a href="http://www.researchinlearningtechnology.net/">http://www.researchinlearningtechnology.net/</a>
J. of Technology & Teacher Education	No	Not ranked	B	Not listed	Not listed	<a href="http://www.aace.org/pubs/jtate/">http://www.aace.org/pubs/jtate/</a>
Technology, Pedagogy & Education	No	Not ranked	B	0.030 Q2 (211)	13	<a href="http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rtpe20/current">http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rtpe20/current</a>

a. Based on statements given at journal websites; values from Thomson Reuters' 2011 *Journal Citation Reports: Social Science Edition*.

b. Journals are ranked according to *IF* values as published at the URLs listed in column 7 (13 Sep 2012). Thomson Reuters may regard the publishing of tables of *IF* values as an infringement of copyright and therefore readers not having institutional library access to 2011 *Journal Citation Reports: Social Science Edition* need to consult the individual journal home pages to ascertain their *IF* values.

c. ARC *Tier* rankings may be obtained conveniently from Lamp, J. (2011). ERA Journal Rankings Access. ERA 2010 Finalised Lists. <http://lamp.infosys.deakin.edu.au/era/?page=jmain>. "Tiers for the Australian Ranking of Journals" is defined at [http://www.arc.gov.au/era/tiers\\_ranking.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/tiers_ranking.htm)

d. SJR (SCImago Journal Rankings) from <http://www.scimagojr.com/> (Subject Area: Social Sciences; Subject Category: Education; Year: 2011; Q = quartile, (rank) = rank in 525 journals in Education. <http://www.scimagojr.com/journalrank.php?category=3304&area=3300&year=2011>)

e. GSM h5-index from Google Scholar Metrics, <http://scholar.google.com.au/intl/en/scholar/metrics.html>

f. Earlier versions of Table 1 were provided in various AJET Editorials, including Editorials 27(6), 28(2) and 28(4). See also Editorial 27(3), concerning the demise of *Tiers*. Data compilation by Roger Atkinson, 13 Sep 2012 (updated 9 Nov 2012).

Of course, the update for Table 1 is a routine, minor matter (BJET up on place on the *Impact Factor* ladder, IS down one place), perhaps akin to an errata item. Nevertheless, there are interesting matters arising. For example, what was the basis for Thomson Reuters acceding to the BJET appeal? Is there a previously unseen problem with the algorithm for *Impact Factor* calculations, or the definitions of "countable publications" that underly *Impact Factor* calculations? However, in the future it is probably unlikely

that we will encounter an increasing number of instances in which a journal succeeds with an appeal concerning data published by any party which has become widely recognised as an authority in matters pertaining to bibliometric-based rankings. The reason for this estimate is that journal editors are more likely to put their main efforts into securing an increased number of citations, using a number of strategies that go beyond simplistic notions that "better quality articles" will generate more citations, and its converse, namely that "more citations" establishes "higher quality". The relationships are complex, though of course with current trends it seems safe to reiterate that researchers will "accord more attention to journal rankings derived from citation count-based bibliometric data, in contrast to rankings based upon other methodologies or unspecified methodologies."

### **Retirement pending becomes retirement completed!**

One of the problems with AJET Editorials, not hitherto recorded, is that nearly always they have been "last minute" jobs, completed only after all articles and tables of contents for each issue were ready for publication (though I hasten to add that often the research reading and data preparation extended over a much longer time). For quite a number of years there have been no volunteers offering to write Editorial items (other than for Special issues). So, it is with an element of relief that I sign off on writing AJET Editorials (above, a concluding update on some of AJET's benchmarks or "KPIs"), which were just one part of my editorial staffing engagement with AJET extending over 16 years. During that period, especially in the latter half, AJET grew in a way that became "outside the box" of traditional ASCILITE/ascilite mainstream membership (that is, the annual conference participants).

My historical perspective on those years can be presented elsewhere: the draft title for the first topic is "Journals with borders, journals without borders: Under-representation of Asian countries in educational research journals", and there are other topics arising from "systematic analyses of submission demographics, and ... studies of aspiring author behaviours".

But here the most important matter is to formally thank all of AJET's authors and reviewers. Without you there is no journal! Though at times in the past two years AJET editorial work grew to be near a full time activity, it has been always a pleasure to have worked *with* you and *for* you.

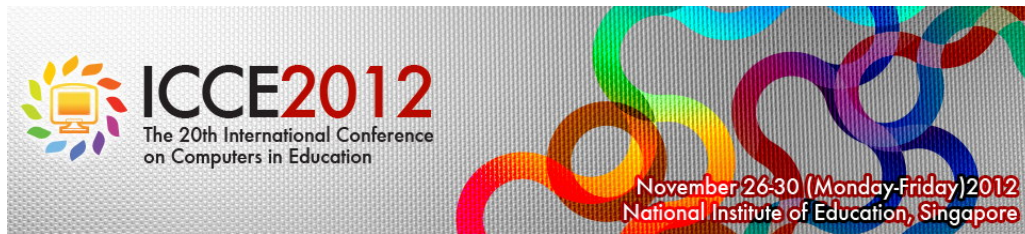
Roger Atkinson

*AJET Production Editor (AJET retirement completed!)*

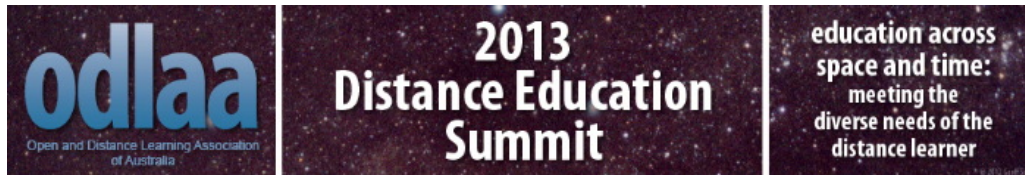
<http://www.roger-atkinson.id.au/>

### **Endnotes**

1. Ascilite (2012). *Presidents Report 2012*. [the file Presidents Report 2012.pdf at <http://hub.ascilite.org.au/mod/folder/view.php?id=208> is available only to ascilite members]
  2. British Journal of Educational Technology - Wiley Online Library. [http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1467-8535](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1467-8535)
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Asia-Pacific Society for Computers in Education and Nanyang Technological University  
Singapore, 26-30 November 2012. <http://www.isl.nie.edu.sg/icce2012/>



Sydney, 4-7 February 2013. <http://www.odlaasummit.org.au/>



Auckland, 1-4 July 2013. <http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2013/>



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<http://www.ask4research.info/icalt/2013/>