Indexing Plan

Working document (June 2011)

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Introduction

Why is there a need for a scientific journal visibility and indexing plan at the UOC? On 20 April 2010, the Publications Committee was set up, chaired by the vice president for research and innovation, with representatives from the Research and Doctoral Committee, the Academic Committee and other areas of the university connected with academic publications .

The Indexing Plan is in response to the need to establish a road map for indexing scientific journals in databases and impact indexes. The reasons behind this are the following:

1. To give meaning to the journals: beyond the social impact (the use that can be made outside the strictly academic sphere), the key to the success of an article is that it is cited, as this means that it is taken into consideration (and often that it is taken into consideration because it offers something new).
2. Because it contributes to the positioning of the UOC as a university: if its publications appear in the leading databases and indexes, it will raise the UOC's profile.
3. Because it contributes to the internationalization of the UOC: to the extent that the journals follow the standards of scientific publications (composition of the scientific committee with 70% of members from outside the institution, publication of abstracts, keywords and title in English, etc), the UOC gains spaces for interaction with other universities, especially in the international sphere.
4. Because well-indexed journals attract good contributions (and good authors, etc): they improve the cycle of production and dissemination of knowledge.
5. Because well-indexed journals are taken into consideration by assessment agencies.
6. Because the good positioning of journals improves the positioning of the courses that support them.
7. Because the Indexing Plan makes sense in knowing where we are, what can be done, where we want to go and how it can be done (and monitor this).

The document is divided into three sections: the first section contains a description of the databases in which journals are indexed, the second section covers the indexing process and quality indexes, and the third section proposes a pathway through the indexing phases of a journal. The document includes appendices with a directory of the databases and indexes referred to.

Databases, directories and catalogues

Access to the content of articles in journals is usually through databases. A database is a set of information organized in registers and stored on an electronic support readable on a computer. Each register constitutes an autonomous unit of information, which may be organized into different fields or data types, which are compiled in the database: author or authors, title of the article, title of the publication, year of publication, etc.

There are currently many databases aimed at providing knowledge and information to students, researchers, professionals, etc. The providers of each of these databases vary, and in many cases, the provider manages more than one database. Other databases belong to publishing houses or institutions that only include their own journals, as is the case of Oxford and Elsevier.

Access to databases may be open or restricted, and it may also be free or by payment of a subscription.

Types of database

Depending on the content of the registers, databases may be:

- Directories: these compile specialized data in a specific subject or activity.
- Documentary databases: these compile registers of documents, of whatever type (a printed publication, an audiovisual, graphic or sound document, an electronic document, etc).

Documentary databases may contain information on any subject, but as regards the UOC's academic journals, it is important to know the scientific databases, which may be:

- Multidisciplinary databases: they embrace various scientific or technical disciplines.
- Specialist databases: they compile documents referring to a specific discipline.

Depending on the documentary analysis of the databases, we may find:

- Databases of abstracts: they comprise simple bibliographical references where the producer only registers the data of the source without offering any analysis of the content. They only include the descriptive data that appear in the

contents. They may sometimes include the abstract of the article, most often published by the author themselves.
- Library catalogues: these are databases that refer strictly to the collection of a library or a network of libraries (group catalogues). They have a high level of homogeneity thanks to the use of international cataloguing standards.

Reference databases and directories

The following table shows the leading reference databases and directories. For each one, it specifies:

- Type of database: full-text database, references database, catalogue or reference directory.
- Subject area of the database.
- Type of access: open or restricted. In the case of restricted-access databases, you can consult availability at the UOC Library, in the Databases section.
- Assessment criteria: public access or otherwise to the criteria for the inclusion of journals in the database is established.

Table 1. Reference databases and directories

Name	Type of database	Subject area	Type of access	Assessment criteria
Academic Search Premier	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
Anthropological Literature	References database	Anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, history, sociology, human geography and geology	Restricted	Yes
ARCE	References database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
Art Index	References database	Art	Restricted	
ASSIA	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes

ATLA Religion Database	References database	Religion and theology	Restricted	Yes
Biblioteca Nacional de España	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Biblioteca Virtual Joan Lluís Vives	Catalogue	Catalan, Valencian and Balearic culture	Open access	No
Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Business Source Elite	Full-text database	Business, economics	Restricted	Yes
CBUC	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
ComAbstracts	References database	Journalism, media	Restricted	Yes
Communication_Abstracts	References database	Communication	Restricted	
Communication & Mass Media Index	Full-text database	Journalism, media	Restricted	
COPAC	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Dialnet	References database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
DOAJ	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
Dulcinea	References database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
EBSCO Legal Collection	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
EconLit	References database	Economics	Restricted	Yes
Educational Research Abstracts (ERA)	References database	Social sciences and education	Restricted	Yes

e-Revistas	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
ERIC	References database	Education	Restricted	Yes
FRANCIS	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
Fuente Académica	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
Geobase	References database	Geography, geology, etc	Restricted	Yes
Historical Abstracts	References database	History	Restricted	Yes
Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals	References database	Law	Restricted	
Index to Legal Periodicals	References database	Law	Restricted	
Information Science and Technology Abstracts	References database	Documentation, information technologies	Restricted	Yes
International Political Science Abstracts	References database	Political science, law	Restricted	Yes
Intute	Reference directory	Multidisciplinary	Open access	
ISI (WoS)	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
ISOC	Reference database	Social sciences and education	Restricted	Yes
Library and Information Science Abstracts	References database	Library science, documentation, information technologies, knowledge management	Restricted	Yes

Library Literature and Information Science	References database	Library science, information sciences	Restricted	
Library of Congress	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Linguistics and Language Behaviour Abstracts (LLBA)	References database	Linguistics, literature	Restricted	Yes
MLA	References database	Humanities, language and literature	Restricted	Yes
OAISTER	Full-text database / catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
PAIS International	References database	Social sciences, humanities	Restricted	Yes
PASCAL	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
Periodicals Index Online	References database	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
Philosopher's Index	References database	Philosophy	Restricted	Yes
Psicodoc	References database	Psychology	Restricted	Yes
Psycinfo	References database	Psychology, medicine	Restricted	Yes
RACO	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	Yes
REBIUN	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
REDALYC	Full-text database	Humanities and social sciences	Open access	Yes

Religion and Philosophy Collection	References database	Religion, philosophy	Restricted	
Scientific Commons	Full-text database	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Social Services Abstracts	References database	Social work, social policies	Restricted	Yes
Sociological Abstracts	References database	Sociology	Restricted	Yes
SUDOC	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No
Ulrich's Periodicals Directory	Reference directory	Multidisciplinary	Restricted	Yes
vLex	Full-text database	Social sciences, law	Restricted	
Westlaw	Full-text database	Law, legislation	Restricted	
Worldwide Political Science Abstracts	References database	Political science	Restricted	Yes
ZDB	Catalogue	Multidisciplinary	Open access	No

Indexing

What indexing means and what it represents

Indexing means putting something in an index, and as here we are speaking of academic journals, this indexing needs to be done in a recognized register or database of scientific articles.

A journals index is a list of scientific journals selected and classed according to different criteria. These indexes are found in country or international databases. As we have seen previously, there are directories, reference or documentary databases, databases

of abstracts and library catalogues; however, there are others that are used to establish and assess the quality of the scientific production of the researchers or institutions connected with research (impact indexes).

We should stress that the fact of a journal being included in one or more assessment indexes not only substantially raises visibility and impact, it also raises the visibility and impact of its authors and the institution promoting it.

The process of indexing or of applying for the inclusion of a journal in a database or index is not always as streamlined as we would like. Every database has its own policy, so we need to know their requirements. This information can be consulted in appendices 1 and 2.

Scientific production is assessed on the basis of its indexing in databases. Indexing scientific journals, therefore, enables the assessment of the quality of this production and is essential for accrediting a specific publication, for requesting a quality mention of a doctoral programme, for applying for funding for research projects and groups, etc.

What is the quality index of a journal?

Indexes used to assess the research work of individuals, groups or institutions include:

- Bibliographic lists or recognized journals indexes: if a journal is included in one of these indexes, it is considered to be a quality indicator (see Table 2), such as Art Index or Science Citation Index.
- Databases that contain information for the identification and assessment of scientific journals, establishing a quality index. There are two types of quality index: one by categories (A, B, C and D) and a numerical one (impact factor, impact index, ICDS).

Each index establishes its own criteria in line with its objectives. The principal one is usually the number of citations, but there are also other factors that are used to assess the quality of journals, such as the journal's prestige among researchers in the field, the dissemination rate, peer reviews, inclusion in other databases and, in general, the fulfilment of minimum quality standards and objectives. We need to be aware that any quality index is subject to constant variability due to the annual reviews of publications, depending on the fulfilment or not of all the requirements.

The impact factor measures the repercussion that a journal has had on the scientific literature based on the analysis of various factors, although in the main, what is rated is

the number of citations that the articles that have been published have had. Consequently, the impact factor enables us to compare journals, produce rankings, reflect the relevance of each title and assess the relative importance in the same field of science. The most important example is the impact factor of the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI), although there are others, such as the Secondary Composite Index Broadcasting (ICDS) metric, which we find in the Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals (MIAR). This scores journals according to the databases they are in, their age and persistence, and the Immediacy Index, which measures the speed with which published articles are cited in the same year of publication.

The use of quality indexes to assess research work varies depending on the different knowledge areas (eg see DOGC No. 5528, 17/12/2009); therefore, we should take this into consideration when indexing our journal in one database or another.

How a JCR impact factor on the ISI Web of Knowledge is calculated

The bibliometric impact indicator of a scientific journal is the result of dividing the number of articles that the journal has published in a year by the citations that the published articles have received during the two subsequent years. This index is the one compiled by the Journal Citation Report (JCR) of the ISI.

Scientific journal assessment, identification and impact index or databases

The following table shows the reference assessment databases. For each one, it specifies:

- Type of database: if it is a bibliographic list or a database with a quality index (both by category and numerically).
- Name of the quality index.
- Subject area.
- Geographical scope: national or international.

Table 2. Scientific journal assessment, identification and impact index or databases

Name	Type of database	Name of the quality index	Subject area	Geographical scope
Arts & Humanities Citation Index	Bibliographic list		Humanities and art	International
CARHUS Plus	Quality index	Category (A,B,C,D)	Social sciences and humanities	National
DICE	Bibliographic list		Humanities, social and legal sciences	National
ERIH	Quality index	Category (A,B,C)	Humanities	International
IN-RECS	Quality index	Impact index	Social sciences	
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)	Bibliographic list		Social sciences	International
Journal Citation Reports (SSCI/SCI)	Quality index	Impact factor	Sciences and social sciences	International
Latindex	Bibliographic list		Multidisciplinary	National
MIAR	Quality index	ICDS	Social sciences and humanities	National
SCOPUS	Quality index	SJR	Multidisciplinary	International
Social Science Citation Index	Bibliographic list		Social sciences	International
RESH	Quality index	Impact index	Social sciences and humanities	International

Work phases

Indexing a scientific journal published at the UOC must be done in line with certain criteria. For it to be effective and have the expected result, we need to know what general databases we should start with and which are the ones we need to "target" in a second phase, once certain relevant impacts and indexes have been achieved.

Besides this, we need to be aware that there are general databases in which nearly all journals should be indexed, but there are others that are more specific that should only be considered depending on the specific subject area of the journal to be indexed.

To help guide everyone at the UOC interested in indexing a scientific journal, we need, therefore, to establish specific work phases that describe the initial databases to be taken into consideration, the ones to be tackled after that, and also the most relevant ones in terms of the main subject area of the journal.

We should remember that the process of indexing or of applying for the inclusion of a journal in a database or index is not always as streamlined as we would like. Every database has its own policy, so we need to know their requirements. This information can be consulted in appendices 1 and 2.

First phase

In the first phase, we have to attempt to get the journal in the following:

- Principal library catalogues (see Table 1).
- Reference directories of periodical publications: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, Dialnet, RACO, DOAJ, OAISTER, Scientific Commons, REDALYC and e-Revistas and Dulcinea (see Table 1).
- Bibliographic lists of recognized prestige, such as Latindex, DICE, etc (see Tables 1 and 2).

Second phase

In the second phase, we need to work on indexing in general databases and in the subject area of the journal, above all to raise its visibility.

In this phase, we are referring to indexing in databases such as Fuente Académica (EBSCO) and FRANCIS, which, despite being general sources, carry significant weight. Similarly, we need to start indexing the journal in more specific sources in line with the main subject area of the journal (see Table 1). The first ones that should be considered in this sense are:

- Social sciences and education: ERA, ERIC.
- Arts and humanities: Intute, ISOC, MLA, Historical Abstracts.
- Law: Index to Legal Periodicals.

We cannot expect a quality assessment database to accept the inclusion of a journal if the journal has not first been indexed in certain databases and it is, consequently, demonstrable that it enjoys some visibility and presence. Therefore, to some extent, the inclusion of a journal in the following databases depends on its presence in the ones described in phases one and two.

Third phase

The third phase of indexing consists of attaining the indexing of any journal in the most prestigious indexes, ie the databases that provide information for assessing and measuring the impact of scientific journals, and also in databases of a general or multidisciplinary nature. However, they must be indexes that do not value such aspects as the trajectory of the publication or citations as these are aspects that can only be achieved after the publication has been in existence for long enough.

Initially, the general indexes (see Table 2) in which we should be present in the field of social sciences and humanities are MIAR, IN-RECS, CARHUS PLUS, RESH and ERIH lists.

Fourth phase

To get to this phase, the journal should have achieved a certain level of excellence that is only possible after an experience of at least two years. This is the time, then, to apply for the inclusion of the journal in Scopus and in ISI Web of Knowledge, which is general but, by contrast, demands an impact only achievable with time.

Summary of the indexing phases of a UOC scientific journal:

Figure 1. Phases of the indexing plan